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NATURE AND HUMAN NATURE

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Nature and Human Nature

Essays Metaphysical and Historical

By
HARTLEY BURR ALEXANDER

τὸ γὰρ ἔργον τέλος, ἡ δ' ἐνέργεια τὸ ἔργον

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To

WILLIAM ROMAINE NEWBOLD

With Admiration and
Affection

PREFACE

THE essays which form this volume follow the reflections of some fifteen years, during which their author's chief pursuit has been philosophy, as recorded in letters. To him philosophy seems to be, in the nature of things, necessarily more or less autobiographical: the reflective refinement out of the dross of a man's diurnal experience,—be it of nature, be it of men, be it of men's souls as portrayed in books,—of some form-giving character which is his essential confession. The systemic treatise, to such a point of regard, appears curiously vain: or at least vain if conceived to be more than a high effort at self-consistency. Perhaps elaborated system does indeed show a finer conscientiousness than governs a less directed activity of the mind, and is hence justified for its author's soul's sake; but in any case the man is behind the book; and however highly *a priori,* however aridly impersonal in form, your book of metaphysics in the end comes down to the plane of all literature: a public *confiteor.*

Essays produced as were these perforce follow the currents of contingent interests,—the dual contingencies of the author's willfulness and of the changing colors of his time. Some are inspired by books of the hour; some by ancient books; some by no book, but by pressures out of the nowhere of fitful circumstance. Nevertheless, the collection should not be without its own consistency, which,

first of all, should be that consistency of the growth of a characteristic point of view which is (in their author's belief) the substance of every philosophy. Moreover, the essays first-coming (essays II-VII) should own also the unity of a single conception, for they were planned as a series, following separately the strands of a single cloth, and while their execution through a number of years has subjected them to a piecing out of colors and to minor modifications of design, the full fabric, it is hoped, is true to the major pattern: and it may, perchance, like an Oriental weaving, gain something in interest from the very variety which passing years have induced. Of the later essays no more need be said than that they, too, follow the woof of living, although, being of philosophy, amid the timely they have endeavored to find out the lasting.

Indebtednesses in matters of thought, where they are not manifest, are frequently difficult to search out. It should suffice that no man is solely a closet philosopher and that no man thinks merely his own thoughts; and beyond this that it is a pleasure for the essayist to adorn his own pages with citations of those utterances out of books which have come to him as sudden and central illuminations.

Apart from the brief exordium, all the essays are here republished from earlier appearances in periodicals. They are not, however, republished with identical titles or with unmodified texts: additions, excisions, alterations—all that goes with editing, they have undergone; it is to be hoped, to their betterment. The first appearances of those here included—not, indeed, in the order of their composition—were as follows:

"Religion and Race Progress," *The Hibbert Journal,* Vol. IX (1910),—there entitled, "The Belief in God and Immortality as Factors in Race Progress."

"The Evolution of Ideals," *International Journal of Ethics,* Vol. XVI (1906).

"Truth and Nature," *The Monist,* Vol. XX (1910).

"The Goodness and Beauty of Truth," *Journal of Philosophy, Psychology and Scientific Methods,* Vol. VIII (1911).

"Beauty and Pain," *Journal* of the American S. P. R., Vol. VII (1913),—there entitled "Immortality and the Problem of Evil."

Epilogue: "Wrath and Ruth," *Journal of Philosophy,* etc., Vol. XVI (1919).

"Human Personality," *Journal* of the American S. P. R., Vol. I (1907).

"The Socratic Bergson," *The Mid-West Quarterly,* Vol. I (1913).

"The Definition of Number," *The Monist,* Vol. XXV (1915).

"Plato's Conception of the Cosmos," *The Monist,* Vol. XXVIII (1918).

"Music and Poetry," *The Mid-West Quarterly,* Vol. III (1916).

"The Philosophy of Tragedy," *The Mid-West Quarterly,* Vol. IV (1916).

"Art and Democracy," *The International Journal of Ethics,* Vol. XXVIII (1918). Delivered as presidential address before the Western Philosophical Association at Northwestern University, March, 1918.

"Hebraism as a Mode of Philosophy," *The Menorah Journal,* Vol. VI (1920),—there entitled, "The Hebrew Contribution to the Americanism of the Future." Delivered as the first Leopold Zunz Memorial Lecture before the Intercollegiate Menorah Association, New York, December, 1919.

"Apologia pro Fide," *The Philosophical Review,* Vol. XXIX (1920). Delivered as presidential address before the American Philosophical Association at Cornell University, December, 1919.

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NATURE AND HUMAN NATURE

ESSAYS METAPHYSICAL AND HISTORICAL

Vain is the discourse of that philosophy by which no human suffering is eased.

—*Epicurus.*

Living without philosophy is just like having the eyes closed without trying to open them; and the pleasure of seeing everything that is revealed to our sight is not comparable to the satisfaction which is given by the knowledge of those things which are opened up to us by philosophy.

—*Descartes.*

I. OF PHILOSOPHY

The wisdom of Philosophers

PHILOSOPHY is the love of wisdom, and the philosopher's task is the quest of truth. These are old sayings which because of their oft-repetition evade the vaguenesses which really beset them, for neither the wisdom which is beloved nor the truth which is sought by philosophers is simply definable; their conceptual colors, the heights of their ambitions, vary as do the tempers of the minds which are their vessels, until it were a willful blindness to find in the unity of their ritual formula a unity of faith. The laughter of Democritus and the tears of Heraclitus reflect antithesis, not oneness, in philosophic wisdom; and there is little resemblance between truth absolute and truth pragmatic, each ardently avowed; nor does the arrogance of the cosmist readily fall, even for comparison, with the fainter assumptions of that humanism over against which it is set. Neither in beginning nor in end are philosophic wisdom and truth of undivided fabric.

Its promise

It is the part, therefore, of one who essays the philosophic adventure to present something of the promise which for him it has, something of its hopes, expectations, motives. What is the nature of the wisdom sought? what is the truth anticipated? Like Epicurus does he seek but the solace of human ills? With Spinoza would he learn the True Way from the bondage of sense to the freedom of ideas? Or with Hegel would he cast the net of logical

form over all that is and snare Eternity in its moments? . . . Does not the very asking of these questions indicate the one possible reply? The old jibe flung at the disagreements of philosophers has a certain point; for there have been thinkers (high dogmatists of the cosmos) whose speculative ambition has soared unto the heaven above the heavens and who have deemed that in the glass of their mind's thought the confines of being are mimetically charted,—a vast faith, and a vain one. But not all, nay, not the greater part, of philosophy is cast in this grandiose measure. Over against the cosmists have been set the humanists, who, with Socrates, would summon philosophy down from the heavens and make it a familiar in the houses and walks of men. For them, as for Plato, the magniloquent dogmatisms of the Naturalists and the high liturgies of the Absolutists are alike but superb myths, at once admirable in their zeal and pathetic in their disaster; and for them, as for all who find the stream of this life's experience turbid and fierce-swollen, the little art that can be gained from its muddied reflections is but the art of steersmanship toward dim-lighted ends—that precious but perilous steersmanship of the soul which Plato named the Truth.

Disagreements of Philosophers

They realize, these humanists, both the necessity for reasoning and the weaknesses of the reason. They instinctively own the nobility of the life of reason, and it is this instinct which makes of them philosophers. But they are not deluded into an idolatry of reason's forms nor into superstitious adulation of its material embodiments, ranged in the bizarre pantheon of the sciences. Γνῶθι σεαυτόν is

Humanism

their warning oracle; and while they are well aware that even knowledge of their own human natures is but a kind of precarious balance between the abysses which underlie animalism and the glooms which over-cloud man's highest insights, nevertheless they cling to this balance as the one power which holds them, head-erect, as men. The life of reason is for them no disengaged clairvoyance, piercing to the foundations of the world; rational judgment is no fetish power set grimly to govern all; rather, reason is but one exacting faculty in the complex of exacting faculties which compose us; it is limited and compressed between welling impulses from below and unrelenting faiths from above, and its life is our human life phantasmically shaping itself, sequent to our phantasmic animal past, anticipative of our phantasmically humaner future. There is little that it can formulate unto itself; less that it can express unto others; it is but a tempestive steersmanship, perilously precious.

Know thyself

The life of reason,—this is philosophy as the humanist conceives it. But the phrase is not without its own crafty subterfuges, for it has been used to cloak what is no more than a disdainful withdrawal from all affecting and intimate human interests. There is no form of asceticism which is crueler to the nature which it mutilates; there is no treachery which more haplessly sells the soul. Reason by itself, disembodied, dissected out,—reason in splendid isolation,—is no more than a ghostly and a ghastly and a dismembered life; and there is philosopher. For him wisdom is to be got only no truth in it; it is the delusion, not the road, of the through the more generous and vital rationality

The Life of Reason

Reason is metaphor

which comes with the realization that words and numbers are at best but glosses upon the margins of life, which is aware that the human meaning of the text is a leaping together of its whole moving discourse, and indeed that our rationalizations are but man anatomized. Nay, it is no figment of imagination to assert that all that we mean by intelligibility and understanding, and all that we conclude in science and art and philosophy, is based upon one of two elementary forms of our experience of ourselves; all expression is metaphor, and the core of all metaphors is in the body and soul of man. There are many doctrinaire names for the two key-tropes: number and idea, integral and organic unity, are the commoner antithetical expressions; but all hark back ultimately to the years of a man's life and the bones of a man's body. Birth and death are, indeed, the ultimates of thought as they are of life, and philosophies, and human knowledge generally, is modelled upon one image or the other. For consider first the philosophies of the dead: the materialisms, the mechanisms, the mathematical realisms,—what figure gives them form save that of the machine, with its revolutions and repetitions of idle motion? and what is the ultimate of this machine,—joints, leverages, articulations, rigid interactions,—save the skeleton of a man? Its measures are all derivative from the inch, foot, yard, pace, which are the thumb-bones, foot-bones, arm-bones, leg-bones of a man; its counters are the numbers which are all told out by the digits of men's limbs; and its conclusions are all the infinitesimal comminutions of physical decay—atomic dust returned to atomic dust. All philosophies

The key-tropes

Mechanism

which spread piecemeal in space a world of atomized things,—relations, positions, numbers,—are philosophies of the image of death, which never articulate and move save in a kind of senseless *danse Macabre;* and the reason which they know is but the burial of reason. Of the other image, that of generation and of life and of the beauty of all things juvenescent, are issued the philosophies of the Whole, opulent with imaginings. For them the arc of a man's days, and above all the promise of them as in an eternal infancy, is the form of truth; and they are splendid with poetic beauty and ethic zeal: they lead on into a Cosmos which is no vast mausoleum, bone-built, but is rather a conqueror's Triumph, all time its way. They are more beautiful, these idealisms, far more beautiful and inspiring than the dead materialisms; they are as the blooming babe to the *rigor mortis;* but are they more true?

The image of Life

Not less so, certainly. The two are the terms of our reasoning; the two are bounding and conjoined experiences. In our being they stand as body and soul; in our minds as object and subject; in our philosophies as nature and human nature. Of their interlacings beyond the range of human experience, who shall speak save by conjectural analogy? Anciently, Protagoras said that Man is the measure of all things knowable; and the progress of human knowledge has been but a comment upon this saying. Nevertheless, in this comment, not all is of equal significance. For the humanist, at least, there is an essential wisdom in the emendment of the saying—Plato having transpired—which is Aristotle's, namely, that it is the *good* man who is the

Homo mensura

measure of all. Here, indeed, is the key to his whole code; for humanistically philosophy is the quest of that truth which is knowledge of man's best self and of that wisdom which can make of this truth a spiritual helmsman. No doubt, beyond man's life and reflected in man's life there is an engulfing Somewhat (which "the Sophists name the World"); but if it be Chaos or if it be Cosmos, can the measures which are a man's bones or the measures which are a man's years, can these say?

The World

The Good Man who is the measure of all—how shall he be discovered? Surely not alone through that goodness which answers intellectual curiosity, the Truth of science; surely not alone through that goodness which fans and fevers the imagination, that Beauty which is also the truth of art; nor yet alone through that goodness which is the truth of Righteousness, and the beauty of Holiness, and the heroism of Nobility. Not through one of these alone shall the humanist find his philosophic measure, nor the full stature of wisdom; not through one, and perchance not through all, for while he must assuredly be pure in his devotion to each and assured that there is no worthy philosophy without this devotion, yet he must also own, at the last, that no one philosophic vision can become the Philosophy of mankind, that no one man's wisdom can be more than a flicker whence another shall light his forward torch. For the splendor of philosophy, after all, is the splendor of many lights in many magnitudes; the splendor of all thought which leads, and will continue to lead men forward, until, as each for himself, so all for the cause of all, shall limn redemptively the undying image of the Pattern Man.

The Pattern Man

II. RELIGION AND RACE PROGRESS

Nous trouverons, dans l'expérience du passé, dans l'observation des progrès que les sciences, que la civilisation ont faits jusqu'ici, dans l'analyse de la marche de l'esprit humain et du développement de ses facultés, les motifs les plus forts de croire que la nature n'a mis aucun terme à nos espérances.

—*Condorcet.*

I

IT was while in hiding from the Terror, under the shadow of the guillotine and but a few months removed from such death, that the Marquis de Condorcet composed that *Esquisse d'un tableau historique des progrès de l'esprit humain* which was devoted to an idealization of man and his civilization and to the voicing of the enthusiastic belief that Nature sets no term to our hopes for human progress. In the intensity of his faith in man, in the zeal of his confidence in the powers of our intelligence to effect our mortal salvation, de Condorcet is but the child of his century, breathing the liberalism of its hopes and the intoxication of its new-found science; but surely among all the men who in his day shared in his superb madness, he—retaining his faith even while hunted to the death by the blood-lust of his fellows—most deserves the admiration which must ever go to noble folly. For the hundred years which have passed since the Terror flared and faded have seen strange contradictions develop both in our conceptions of Nature and of Human Nature, and in our civilization

Condorcet on the Progress of Mankind

Nature and Human Nature

The Eighteenth Century in retrospect

strange monstrosities. Faiths not less vain, but surely less fine; hopes not less huge, but surely less noble, have come to be ours; and multitudinous confusions, the noise of conflicting voices, taking away all simplicity and singleness from our lives. A smile and a sigh, the one sophisticated, the other sad, is all with which today we can lay aside the splendid but vainly glowing picture of human progress which the eighteenth century imagined. Our civilization is not of that thing.

What indeed did the nineteenth century give, save the lie to eighteenth century beliefs? Its great contribution to thought was the conception of Evolution, cosmic and human, and because the word is a sounding word, tickling the ears with vanity, it seemed for a time to give beautiful support to all that the Revolutions hoped: was there not in the very naming of it but another proof of perpetual progress? Indeed, the two terms, Evolution and Progress, came to be unthinking synonyms, their distinction lost in their mutual bruit: and both became engrossed in the liturgy of a new idolatry of Man (not in his form and pattern but in his embodied mortality), which was to become that cult of the pleasured senses which we name our civilization. But essentially nineteenth-century Evolution belied eighteenth-century Humanity: the latter was in spirit, if not in form, Christian, for its central tenet, like the central tenet of the mission of Jesus, was belief in men, in all men, however born; whereas of the creed of the evolutionists, in science and in politics, the central tenet is the distinction of men into high and low, superior and inferior, fit and cursed, and hence all the intolerable cant of the

Evolution and Humanity

"white man's burden" and the intolerable hypocrisy of the redemptive mission of European culture.

Do we in sooth know ourselves so well? Are we so sure of our own sanity? We have lived a contradiction, in our politics professing a democratic faith in man which in our science and industry we have denied; and can a lasting truth be founded in a living lie? . . . Nay, more, is it today in our hands to be world-masters and yet not captains of our own souls? Or is there no essential Man, superior to all civilizations, all evolutions, independent of all progress save the spiritual, whom we can better save in ourselves in our better generosity to our fellows? With a faith that might be sublime were its object not our complacent selves we assume the immeasurable superiority of our institutions and conventions, not only over those which varying peoples do actually possess, but also over all that exist in them potentially. Ourselves were not created in a day, and shall we forget, in wanton pride, that with each extinguished racial culture there dies a possibility of world-riches, which, in its own good time might have come to fruition? We know well what has befallen the Red Indian. Whatever the faults of his native savagery, it was not without promise. Today all the possibilities of Indian genius are vanished, and the world must ever remain the poorer for what the Red Man might have given it had the fates been kindlier or we less arrogant in ignorance and prejudice.

The conceit of Civilization

The Red Indian

II

Surely before we assume the inviolable worth of our civilization we should gain comprehension

of the ideals of life in which it is founded and to which it trains men; before we too zealously devote ourselves to commercial or intellectual or religious propaganda we should make certain of the benefits which our commerce, our science, our creeds can bestow. Clear perspective alone can insure rational as well as clean motives in the work of civilizing,—and not the least gift of perspective is the light in which it will throw our own ideals.

The evolution of Ideals is not analogous to biophysical evolution

There is but one point of view from which it is profitable to consider the question. Ideals are, of all human creations, the most intimately historical in character; and it is only the study of history that can assure us of sound understandings of ideal intentions. This is not evolutionism; ideals have their own evolution, their own natural unfoldment, but it is mere confusion of thought to identify in form the conscious maturing of human nature in conscious human institutions with the changing swirls of a cosmic dust or the blind succession of earth's flora and fauna. The identification has been attempted; and it has led to bizarre social theory and to horrible politics. Surely the hour is come for the more tempered return to those foundations in thought and to that expression in literature which reveal most truly what ideals human experience and reflection have hitherto made fundamental to human conduct. Man's written word, his bequeathed tradition, is his challenge to death; history is his judgment upon nature.

By way of broad generalization we may discriminate historic ideals as of two types: (1) The ideal of a life devoted to some interest *beyond its own* powers of realization—a life devoted to a com-

munity, whether this be family, tribe, nation, church, or the total of humanity; and (2) the ideal of a life bent upon realizing to the full *its own* possibilities, whether of sensuous pleasure, of personal aggrandizement, or of spiritual exaltation. The *communal ideal* and the *individual ideal*—these appear throughout the history of mind, either in antagonism or in compromise, as fundamental life-motives; and to these, in historic relation, our argument will turn.

Types of ideal

III

Obviously the primitive ideal is the communal. The very existence of human society, under primitive conditions, is dependent on the notion of fidelity to the commune—to clan, or tribe, or nation. Indeed, it is this *fidelity*—the cement of society—which makes of man Man instead of Brute. "For perhaps thousands of years,"—I quote Francis Gummere,—"humanity was hovering on the far border of communal organization, and led a mainly selfish and unsocial life"; and when the passage from selfish to social, from brute to human, did take place, "as with the earth itself, these psychical changes were volcanic."

Fidelity

With our Germanic ancestry, after courage in battle, the loftiest of virtues was faithfulness to the chieftain or leader, the hero, who incarnated in his person and spirit the tribal ideal. So important was this virtue that, says Tacitus (voicing the very spirit of the Forty Ronin at the other edge of the world), "shame and utter ruin of all reputation are his who leaves the battlefield alive, after his prince has fallen." And in his estimate of ancient German character Gummere writes:

The Germanic ideal of Virtue

Ruedeger

Fidelity to chieftain and king redeems and raises Hagen of the Nibelungen Lay from a mere assassin at the outset to a splendid hero at the end. The character of Ruedeger in the same Lay shows us a situation as acute as any Greek tragedy can produce. Not even Orestes, with filial duty dragging him in opposite directions, is so completely tragical a figure as this Germanic warrior halting in agony between disobedience to his lord and battle with his guests and son-in-law; it is instructive to note that in this struggle between kin-duty and vassal-duty, the latter conquers. Finally, we may mark that when missionaries came into the Germanic lands to preach Christ and his twelve apostles, nothing appealed more actively to the native than the resemblance of this bond between master and disciple to his own system of chieftain and clansmen. Christ died for his beloved, and they endured martyrdom for him. What simpler theology?

In this primitive stage the individual's devotion to the commune is given form and intensity by the concrete personality of the Leader. The Hero and the Heroic Family gather into themselves the ideality of the whole group,—as, in a sense, the Saviour and the Holy Family figure the ideal of Christendom. A man's troth is his fidelity to society under the form of its incarnate head.

The Chivalric ideal

The same fidelity, beautified and broadened by compassion, underlies the Mediæval ideal of Chivalry and knightly troth. Save this: In the Mediæval mode of conception the devotion of faith is tendered at once to an outward and earthly lord and to an inward and heavenly. Nowhere more finely is the chivalric ideal expressed than in the oath of King Arthur's knights of the Round Table:

Then the king stablished all his knights, and gave them that were of lands not rich, he gave them lands, and charged them never to do outrageousity nor murder, and always to flee treason; also, by no means to be cruel, but to give mercy unto him that asketh mercy, upon pain of forfeiture of their worship and lordship of King Arthur for evermore; and always to do

ladies, damosels, and gentlewomen succour, upon pain of death. Also, that no man take no battles in a wrongful quarrel for no law, nor for no world's goods. Unto this were all the knights sworn of the Table Round, both old and young. And every year were they sworn at the high feast of Pentecost.

But the chivalric ideal is still that of a personal relationship, even if this relationship be idealized. For a more advanced type of the communal ideal we must turn to that other great root of European civilization—the culture of the classic nations.

The Classic ideal

In societies characterized by fixed settlements,—by a fatherland, reverence for the tombs of ancestors, and that sense of a hallowed soil which the ancient imagination expressed to itself under the manifold forms of the *di indigetes,*—the ideal of the *City* and the City's future, of all that a nation and a nation's posterity can mean to the nation's builders, replaces the more personal ideal of a simpler culture. So we find developed the classic conception of civic patriotism: devotion to one's native city, not for the sake of its rulers, nor for the sake of one's fellow-citizens, nor yet in any altruistic sense for the sake of the community as the common interest of its several members, but rather for the city itself as an ideal: Athens as deified in Athenian imagination, Rome for its Roman Imperium!

The City

Our modern socialisms are all constructed with a view to the comfort and well-being of the individual (the average individual); in last resort, they are designed for a purely subjective and impalpable individualism, a chimerical average happiness. The classic ideal is at the opposite pole. "A state," says Aristotle, "is not a mere aggregate of persons, but a union of them sufficing for the purposes of life." And the great purpose of life is the

Aristotle's conception of the state

deed of the State. "A city, like an individual, has a work to do"; and "that city which is best adapted to the fulfilment of its work is to be deemed the greatest."

The Athens of Pericles

The gap which separates the modern socialistic ideal of adipose bliss from the ancient vision of a City of Man, man-created yet god-like in its bright supremacy over individual wish and power, must broaden in the mind of every reader of the great "Funeral Speech" which Thucydides puts on the tongue of Pericles:

> . . . . We do not anticipate pain, although, when the hour comes, we can be as brave as those who never allow themselves to rest; and thus too our city is equally admirable in peace and in war.
>
> For we are lovers of the beautiful, yet simple in our tastes, and we cultivate the mind without loss of manliness.
>
> Wealth we employ, not for talk and ostentation, but when there is a real use for it. To avow poverty with us is no disgrace; the true disgrace is in doing nothing to avoid it.
>
> An Athenian citizen does not neglect the state because he takes care of his own household; and even those of us who are engaged in business have a very fair idea of politics. We alone regard a man who takes no interest in public affairs, not as a harmless, but as a useless character; and if few of us are originators, we are all sound judges of a policy.
>
> The great impediment to action is, in our opinion, not discussion, but the want of that knowledge which is gained by discussion preparatory to action. For we have a peculiar power of thinking before we act and of acting too, whereas other men are courageous from ignorance, but hesitate upon reflection. And they are surely to be esteemed the bravest spirits who, having the clearest sense of both the pains and pleasures of life, do not on that account shrink from danger.[1]

The end is action

Wealth is an instrument to achievement; private interests are subordinate to civic duties; pain and pleasure alike are accidents of a life, the end of which is action; and the action itself is worth while

[1] Jowett, *Thucydides.*

for the sake of the great Symbol it shall impress upon the history of the world—the City Beautiful:

The Funeral Oration

> In the hour of trial Athens alone among her contemporaries is superior to the report of her.
>
> No enemy who comes against her is indignant at the reverses which he sustains at the hands of such a city; no subject complains that his masters are unworthy of him.
>
> And we shall assuredly not be without witnesses; there are mighty monuments of our power which will make us the wonder of this and of succeeding ages. . .
>
> For we have compelled every land and every sea to open a path for our valor, and have everywhere planted eternal memorials of our friendship and of our enmity.
>
> Such is the city for whose sake these men nobly fought and died; they could not bear the thought that she might be taken from them; and every one of us who survive should gladly toil in her behalf.

It was for such a City—and not for the decaying Athens of his own declining days—that Socrates, "wronged by men, though not by us, your country's Laws," chose the honor of death rather than the ignominy of flight; and it was because the ideal of such a city glowed so bright in his mind also that Plato cried out in bitterness against the statesmen who had "filled the city with docks and arsenals and tributes and material trash, rather than with wisdom and righteousness."

Roman patriotism

A more grandiose, but less noble conception animated Roman patriotism. It was the spectacular quality of sovereign rule, the pageantry of imperial dominion, that mastered the Roman mind,—

> Tu regere imperio populos, Romane. . .

"Thine be it, Roman, to hold the peoples in imperial sway, to impose on men the law of peace, to spare the vanquished and bring low the proud!" The Empire, men believed (at least in the age of Augus-

tus), was a return to that Golden Age of Peace and Plenty which men of every race, disappointed in present attainment, discern in a misty past,—

> Augustus Cæsar, divi genus, aurea condet saecula qui rursus Latio, regnata per arva Saturno quondam.

Again it is an ideal transcending both the individual life and the aggregate of individual lives; it is an ideal commune, an ideal city, an ideal nation, in whose service men find their lives complete.

The Cosmic City

The world-view developed by classic culture was thus one of a great world-polity, an organized commune, which yet derived from its organization an imaginative value vastly finer than that to be derived from a conception of society as a mere aggregate of members, or citizens. It is a value that can only be expressed as that of an organic whole, with reference to which the individual is a part. And the fact that such a whole transcends individual lives, snatches up individual destinies into mightier destinies, builds a nation's fate out of the particular fates of men,—this fact gives it the impressiveness that requites men for the service required of them. Faith in the nation's life and destiny becomes a sufficient reason for the individual's toil in its behalf.

In the Feudal ideal Fealty to the Chieftain, in the Classic ideal Citizenship, becomes each the highest expression of the obligation imposed and the reward given by the commune. Yet, as time clarifies thought, each takes on a more sublimated guise: the Chieftain ceases to be an outward and corporeal leader, he is made over into an inward and spiritual King; the City is seen no longer as a temporal and material empire, but as the domain of Law,—that

"Her Laws are the City's Lords"

Law which Heraclitus named the true "rampart of the City," and Plato, yet more nobly: "Her Laws are the City's Lords."

Spartan law

Herodotus tells how Xerxes, upon learning the small number of the Greeks resisting him, finds it inconceivable that they should freely face such odds: "How can a thousand, or ten thousand, or fifty thousand men, of their own free will, face such a force as mine?" he asks. And the Spartan answers for his countrymen: "O king, though they are freemen, they are not absolutely free. For over them is one master, the *Law,* whom they fear more than your subjects fear you. Whatsoever it commands, they do; and it ever commands the one thing, forbidding them to fly before any number of men, but to stand their ground and conquer or die." The essential nature of the City is an inner and invisible nature; the homage which she exacts is bred into the fibre of her citizens, and becomes their true spiritual heritage.

Rabelais on the meaning of Honor

An identical process creates the chivalric spirit which is the offspring of feudalism. "In their rule," writes Rabelais (and in his *Theleme* he is thinking as much of chivalric nobility as of monastic reformation), "is only this clause, Do as ye will. For freemen, well-born, well-instructed, familiar with honorable companionship, have by nature an instinct and spur which always impels them to virtuous deeds and restrains them from vice: the which they name *Honor.*"

Law and *Honor*—these two are the great transmutations of Classic and Feudal devotion to the commune. There is necessary a third quality before the communal ideal can take on its noblest meaning. . .

Now, said Sir Gawaine, we have been served this day of what meats and drinks we thought on; but one thing beguiled us, we might not see the holy Grail, it was so preciously covered. Wherefore I will make here avow, that tomorn, without longer abiding, I shall labour in the quest of the Sangreal, that I shall hold me out a twelvemonth and a day, or more if need be, and never shall I return again unto the court till I have seen it more openly than it hath been seen here; and if I may not speed I shall return again as he that may not be against the will of our Lord Jesu Christ.

The quest of Sangreal

When they of the Table Round heard Sir Gawaine say so, they arose up the most part and made such avows as Sir Gawaine had made.

Anon as King Arthur heard this he was greatly displeased, for he wist well that they might not againsay their avows. Alas, said King Arthur unto Sir Gawaine, ye have nigh slain me with the avow and promise that ye have made; for through you ye have bereft me the fairest fellowship and the truest of knighthood that ever were seen together in any realm of the world; for when they depart from hence I am sure they all shall never meet more in this world, for they shall die many in the quest. And so it forthinketh me a little, for I have loved them as well as my life, wherefore it shall grieve me right sore, the departition of this fellowship: for I have had an old custom to have them in my fellowship.

Plato had directed men's eyes from the outward to the inner and heavenly City; chivalry turned men from the earthly to the heavenly King: and in this change Christendom became possible.

At first the change is only one of degree. The Church is the Church Militant, demanding of its followers unquestioning service, unhesitating sacrifice. Authority and Submission—this is the outward form. But inwardly a new quality is added to the world ideal. Greece and Rome developed the ideal of *Law;* Feudal Europe developed *noblesse oblige;* Christianity added the ideal of the intrinsic value of the average soul—the foundation of *Democracy.* This is not an individual character, but still a social one: the Church is for humanity, for man-

Noblesse oblige

kind, not for individual men; it is humanity's common and higher expression, the outward realization of an interest which demands not merely that each soul be saved, but that there be a multitude of saved souls. Heaven must ring with such a general chorus of hosannas that it shall seem as one eternal voice rising from the congregated nations of the earth. And so we find arisen that augustness of tradition which gives to the Roman Church its tremendous plea as the visible embodiment of Christendom. Jesuit zeal is the ecclesiastical version of the efficient life, and the temporal power of the papal throne is made the symbol of the eternal destinies of nations.

The visible Church

Thus we have again the conception of an ideal city, though the City of God is only mortally symbolized by the earthly Church. Christian thought at its best needs not the earthly dominion to symbolize the Dominion Beyond; yet, even at its best, it never escapes this social conception,—the Heavenly City is still a city, an idol of man's earthly estate.

The Ecclesia of God

To us of today Christendom is far more a physical and vital fact than we are wont to think. It is to us something broader than fatherland, though less than humanity. It is a unit, an organization within which we find ourselves unconsciously placed, and with respect to which we as unconsciously mould our conduct. It is an ideal of culture, distinguished from Moslem culture and from Buddhist culture, to which we instinctively turn for our best conception of life. For we have been so long trained in the Faith, that there is no possibility of other allegiance.

Has the conception of a City of Man perhaps

The City of Man

already begun to replace that of the City of God? Are we beginning to think of Humanity as something even more important than Christendom? Are the continents of Earth uniting into one domain of Man?

Let us not over-lightly assent. True it is that the great movement of the Enlightenment followed the disruption of the earthly Church and directed men's minds from Super-nature to Nature,—appearing, as it were, the child of Protestantism and a sire of Infidelity. Nevertheless, even the most positive Humanitarianism—naturalistic and anti-churchly though it be—is, after all, but the distinctive expression of Christendom. Its deepest root is that simple and direct Democracy which Jesus, and Jesus alone, introduced into the world: so that we can fairly say that the democratic sentiment of modern Europe is the fullest expression of its Christianity, and if Humanity is to be conquered by the European Idea this will mean nothing short of its final incorporation into Christendom.

Democracy and Christianity

Such an outcome is not unthinkable. But if it be a purely social and political outcome, a mere World-Democracy, can it thereby satisfy men's aspirations? Can a de-spiritualized Christianity (which in point of fact is what naturalistic Humanitarianism amounts to) achieve a World's salvation?

I think the answer to this is more than foreshadowed in King Arthur's presentiment. "We have been served this day," said Sir Gawaine, "of what meats and drinks we thought on; but one thing beguiled us. . . ." And so the Knights set forth, each on his *individual* errantry, to suffer individually his labors, and seek individually his reward. The

Individual errantry

meats and drinks and goodly fellowship of the Table Round could not satisfy the spiritual hunger and thirst, nor the troth of an earthly King—even in a Golden Age—hold immortal souls in a merely mortal communion.

All that the Humanitarian ideal offers is meat and drink and fellowship; but there comes a time in every life that is worth living when, with "the clearest sense of both the pains and pleasures of life," the thorny road of individual salvation is chosen: even the City must be such that "*every one* of us should gladly toil in her behalf."

IV

Individualism

So much for communal ideals. There remains to be considered the conception of the individual life for its own sake—the worth of a man's life to himself, apart from any social element.

Even in primitive society we find this counter-conception asserting itself. At all events there is a clear indication of the sense of prize in personal life in the fact that among savages the supreme virtue is contempt of death: all the sanctions of society, all the hard conditions of the struggle for existence, must be utilized to create this unwonted mood. And where raw indifference to life is found impossible, there grows up as a special sanction of courage the doctrine of a worthier lot in the world to come for the battle-fallen hero than for the ordinary man. So we have the Moslem's lure of instant Paradise for the battle-slain; the Aztec's brave hope of a future with Tonatiuh, the Sun,—the heaven of men dying in battle, women dying in child-birth, each for race-preservation; or again, the old Norseman's iron

The rewards of Paradise

determination to escape the "straw death" and win Valhalla even by the poor pretext of a spear-wound at the hands of a friend.

Gilgamesh Epic

> He rests on a couch, drinking pure water,
> Who died in battle . . .
> But he whose body is thrown into the field—
> The leavings of the pot, remains of food,
> What is thrown beside the way, he eats . . .

So speaks the Babylonian Epic of Gilgamesh, making what poor division it can of the dismal Underworld fates in favor of the man who gives up his life for society.

For even such distinction of fate is poor compensation for the loss of Upperworld joys and the good years of a man's life. "To him that is joined to all the living there is hope; for a living dog is better than a dead lion," saith Ecclesiastes. And we all remember the colloquy of Odysseus and the shade of Achilles:

Ecclesiastes

The Odyssey

> For of old, in the days of thy life, we Argives gave thee one honor with the gods, and now thou art a great prince here among the dead. Wherefore let not thy death be any grief to thee, Achilles.
>
> Nay, speak not comfortably to me of death, O great Odysseus. Rather would I live on ground as the hireling of another with a landless man who had no great livelihood, than bear sway among all the dead that be departed.[2]

Death to the ancient was grimly physical. His Underworld contained no touch of that grotesque and grisly activity which dominated the Mediæval conception of the Danse Macabre. Rather, it was the spectacle of the powerless and decaying body, erstwhile so full of vital play, that struck home to men's imaginations. . .

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[2] Butcher and Lang, *Odyssey*.

Dust is their nourishment, clay their food;
They do not see light, they dwell in darkness;
Clothed like a bird whose folded wings are its covering.

So the Babylonian laments his dead; and Job,—

Book of Job

They shall lie down alike in the dust,
And the worms shall cover them . . .
The clods of the valley shall be sweet unto them.

I cite these instances of the ancient and primitive feeling of the horror of death because they seem most sharply to emphasize the converse conviction of the joy of living—that delight in the mere exercise of vital function which we customarily think of as the "pagan" spirit. We have in us too much of the heritage of Christian asceticism, with its long-cultivated contempt for the world of the flesh, to feel spontaneous sympathy with the ancient delight in riot of sense and zestful play. The notion that a child should be grateful to the parent solely because the latter has brought to him the "most sweet light" of this life, startles us when we meet it in Cicero; and I am afraid that we have even less sympathy than Plato with the lament of age:

Christian asceticism

De senectute

I cannot eat, I cannot drink; the pleasures of youth and love are fled away; there was a good time once, but now that is gone, and life is no longer life.[3]

Paganism takes the mere joy of living to be the sufficient justification of life. But Paganism is a mood rather than an ideal of life; it is a sort of natural Hedonism, not with any reflective consciousness of pleasure as its end, but bent upon activity just for the sake of the exuberance activity brings. It belongs to the child-life of the race, having in

[3] This and other citations from Plato are from Jowett's *Dialogues*, occasionally with modifications.

it all the naïveté of childhood, and it cannot be perpetuated into the years of our race maturity.

Hedonism is philosophized Paganism

Paganism philosophized is Sensuism. And we find this outcome realized as soon as the pagan mind had come to philosophical self-study. The ideal of the Cyrenaics was the life of sensation for its own sake, the test of the worth of sensations being their power to yield pleasure. Sensuous pleasure, in other words, is made the measure of life's worth.

Carpe diem

This is susceptible of various interpretations, and has received them. In the first instance we have the earthy ideal of gross gratification of appetite: "Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." Such an ideal is more or less furthered by materialistic philosophies, and is become a factor to be reckoned with in modern ethics. It is an entirely intelligible conception of good, and is capable of unanswerable defence, once the individualistic right to judge on purely private grounds is conceded. Like solipsistic scepticism, its logic is invulnerable if its premises be granted.

Æstheticism

A second phase of paganism is the sophisticated living for mere breadth, mere multiplicity of contacts with the world of sense. This usually appears as a defence for the license often demanded for the artistic nature. At its best it resolves into Æstheticism—the quest of delicate perfumes, of subtile harmonies of tone and color, luxuries of refined indulgence. It may even take a properly ethical cast, urging a world-ideal of the "life beautiful" for the sake of its æsthetic appeal. Pater is, of course, the modern exemplar of this type of theory, which was by no means without adherents in the decadent years of ancient culture.

A third development of the pagan ideal is that which finds its realization in appropriation: in attainment of goods and, above all, what goods stand for and enable—worldly power. "The Ego's desire of appropriation is boundless," says Nietzsche; and it is Nietzsche who develops to the extreme this ideal, in his conception of the man of the future as "the great blond beast" ravaging the world of benefits according to the measure of his strength. In place of the sensual gratification of the Cyrenaic, and the sensuous exclusiveness of the Æsthete, the Nietzschean ideal lauds mere action, mere strenuosity. To society it is more perilous than either of the others, for while they are passively anti-social, Nietzscheanism is boisterously and meaninglessly destructive.

Nietzsche

Thus, in every line of development, paganism comes into conflict with all that we customarily call morality. It is a philosophy of self-gratification, which the individual *may* make reasonable to himself, but which society cannot accept and still remain society. The anti-moral of the pagan ideal is compatible only with social anarchy.

Paganism anti-social

But there is another type of individualistic theory, the Christian doctrine that the true object of life is the salvation of the individual soul. We found this ideal, symbolized in the errant adventure of the Holy Grail, already in conflict with Christian democracy; and the subjective turn of modern thought has been served to give it a new and intenser impetus. The main hypotheses of the conception are: (1) That the life we live is not good in itself, that its sole purpose is to prepare us for the vastly more significant life to come; and (2) that it is each man's

Christian philosophy of life

business, first of all, to see to the saving of his own soul. That the salvation offered by Christianity is to be attained through self-sacrifice, is due rather to the fact of its Founder's character than to the logic of its philosophic foundation.

Christian, Pythagorean and Hindu

The Christian view has important points of resemblance with the world-ethics of the ancient Pythagoreans and of the Hindus. In common with these, the Christian attitude toward life is pessimistic: Evil predominates over good; the corporeal world is a prison-house of the soul; our present life is a mere preparation for the future, and the evil of our present life is expiation for the sin of the past (though here, in a minor detail, the Christian parts ways with Hindu and Pythagorean, the "original sin" of the first parents replacing with him their doctrine of guilt inherited from sin in previous incarnations).

It is obvious that such a philosophy of life is intensely individualistic, and also that it must lead to an ideal of conduct precisely opposite to the ideals springing from paganism. We can trace this ideal in three distinct phases.

Propitiation

First (where Christianity is again at one with Pythagoreanism and Hinduism), we have the ideal of the ascetic life—the life which endeavors in every possible way to escape the normal life of the natural man. Virtue consists in denial of appetite, in physical torture, in the cultivation of physical deformity, in race suicide—in every possible means of defeating the malevolence of the creative powers. The theory is merely an extreme exaggeration of that primitive frame of mind which induces, for example, the Arawak to inflame his eyes with red pepper that he

may appease the demon of the rapid he is about to shoot—escape from the great evil of death being bought by display of the lesser evil of pain self-administered. Or, to cite an interpretation, it is the mood in which Browning's Caliban atones the presumptuous pride of his soliloquy upon Setebos:

Browning's *Caliban*

> What, what? A curtain o'er the world at once!
> Crickets stop hissing; not a bird! Or, yes,—
> There scuds His raven that hath told Him all!
> It was fool's play, this prattling! Ha! the wind
> Shoulders the pillared dust, death's house o' the moor,
> And fast invading fires begin! White blaze!
> A tree's head snaps—and there, there, there, there, there,
> His thunder follows! Fool to gibe at Him!
> Lo! 'Lieth flat and loveth Setebos!
> 'Maketh his teeth meet through his upper lip,
> Will let those quails fly, will not eat, this month,
> One little mess of whelks, so he may 'scape!

A second type of life-value (characteristic of Christian influence, though by no means exclusively Christian) of which, again, the aim is escape from normal activities, is the mystical conception. Mystic trance or mystic consciousness is regarded as the supreme good, and usually as a foretaste of the bliss of the life to come. Man's voyage through the carnal seas of terrene experience is worth while chiefly for the occasions it offers for the manifestation or indulgence of the mystic state. The striking traits of this consciousness are:—(1) Some degree of anæsthesia, the world of sense being wholly or partially blotted out, which perhaps partly explains (2) the sense of total self-surrender; (3) an inner perception of the harmony of the cosmos, a feeling of union with God; and (4) an accompanying emotion of ineffable bliss. "In the orison of union," says Saint Teresa, "the soul is fully awake as regards

The Mystic's escape

and the Saint's

God: but wholly asleep as regards things of this world and in respect of herself." And another saint, writing of the mystic revelation, says: "A single one of these intoxicating consolations may reward the soul for all the labours undergone in life."

It is obvious that if the lives of men generally were ordered with respect to the attainment (even at rare periods) of this state of bliss, we should speedily develop into antisocial decay, at best into monasticism. And it is therefore not a little interesting to find at the present day perhaps the purest development of the mystic life among the American Indians, a race whose hopes for social realization in this world have long since vanished. The Ghost-Dance religion is the supreme expression of this ideal, an effort to realize in trance and dream an ideal of national life which the hard circumstances of their contact with the whites have denied to the Indian in reality. How truly the Indian type of experience corresponds to that of the saints of the Church may be shown from the words of a poor dreamer of the Squaxin tribe, on Puget Sound, a man half-Christianized but wholly ignorant:

The Ghost-Dance Religion

> At night my breath was out, and I died. All at once I saw a shining light—great light—trying my soul. I looked and saw my body had no soul—looked at my own body—it was dead. My soul left body and went up to judgment-place of God. . . . . I have seen a great light in my soul from that good land; I have understand all Christ wants us to do.

And, one should add, this dreamer reformed the habits of his tribe, making them temperate and industrious men.

But there is yet another outcome of the Christian theory, for thoughtful men the most important of all. There is not one of us, I believe, who, what-

ever his theoretical conviction, could find himself practically capable of a whole-souled reversion to paganism. In our moral nature there is an element of restraint, of Puritanism, of which we can never rid ourselves. Conscience, the sense of duty, the sense of sin—these are elements which Christianity has intensified in the human mind in manifold ways. And no matter what our philosophy may be, however materialistic it may become, we cannot escape this Christian consciousness which marks us off from the non-Christian races of men. For it is, let us note, an *individual* conscience, an *individual* sense of duty, *individual* sense of sin. Social duty, *noblesse oblige,* is certainly as strongly developed among the Japanese, for example, as with us; but that inner control which bites the spirit of a man in his solitude, giving him for his sins a sense of transgression against God which makes hell intelligible—that is largely the creation of Christianity. It has become in us a kind of moral instinct, and no matter how we rationalize our ideas of self-development, they always contain a full measure of the Christian demand for the soul's salvation.

Conscience

The sense of sin

Hedonism, in other words, is bastard to the Christianized mind. If happiness be made the ideal of the human race, it must first make terms with our Christian impulse to self-denial,—at least, denial of the carnal self for the sake of the spiritual,—and with our Christian zeal for proselytizing. Buddhism and Mohammedanism, like Christianity, are missionary religions. But Buddhism rests its plea upon the denial of individualism; and the Moslem ideal is frankly political; it is only Christianity that combines individualism and democracy,—self-realization

Self-realization in self-sacrifice

and self-sacrifice,—a conception clearly impossible on purely hedonistic grounds. And this I believe to be the reason why the hedonistic theory in modern times has seemed rational to the European mind only as generalized into the "greatest good of the greatest number,"—though this, too, must mean the eventual socialization of the Christian conception and the final abandonment of individualism as an ethical ideal.

Egoism leads to race suicide

But modern thought has given another, a conclusive reason why individualism (at least when understood as unadulterated egoism) can never be a paramount life-ideal. The reason is single and conclusive. Pure egoism means race suicide. We cannot say to any given man that he shall not make individual pleasure the guide of his conduct; but we can say, and say authoritatively, that no race of men can do this and survive upon the face of the earth.

Nature herself, in making man a gregarious animal, has determined him to social ideals; and if the history of nations tells us anything, it is that races or peoples who are temperamentally careless of the future are the decaying and vanishing races and peoples. The fungus populations of gold-hunters' camps are the veriest ephemera compared with the towns of the corn-raisers who follow them. Spain ravished the gold of the New World; poverty and decay are the rewards of her lack of foresight. And we ourselves—bent on material splendour, inebriated by the license of easy gain—are we not already seriously asking if we have not sold the birthright of our race, mortgaged its promise of a great part in human affairs, by the selfishness and senselessness of our self-indulgence?

We may not deny to the individual his right to a life of self-gratification. But the race or a nation is no mere aggregate of individuals: it is itself an individual of a larger power, an organism; and to every race and nation we may and must say that the duration and efficiency of its life must be in proportion to its realization of a social ideal.

Race vitality calls for a social ideal

V

In what precedes I have briefly sketched the several types of communal and individual life-conceptions. These conceptions have been developed in historic contexts which, in large part, explain them. But no one of them has been established as a universal model; for history knows no universals. Today the problem of conduct is as fresh and unsolved as ever it has been in the past, and as insistent, and as challenging. History has given it no enduring answer; none the less, history has given a great vantage in setting forth with some distinction the guiding types, in portraying for the modern man the kinds of plots in which he may imaginatively dramatize his own future.

The modern problem

What, then, is to be the attitude of this modern man, the man of education, able to estimate all the factors involved, all the consequences of his action, toward his personal plan of conduct? How is he to order his life without offense to reason or to the sense of duty? How is he to choose between the two ideals which he must take into account: the egoistic ideal—what his life shall mean to himself; the altruistic or communistic ideal—what his life shall mean to his kind?

"It is," says Rousseau, "a grand and beautiful

Rousseau

spectacle to see man issue as it were from naught by his proper efforts, dissipate by the light of his reason the shadows in which nature has enveloped him, elevate himself above himself, mount in the ardour of his spirit even to celestial regions, traverse with a giant's pace, like unto the sun, the vast expanse of the universe, and finally, what is yet greater and more difficult, enter within himself in order there to study Man, to know his nature, his duties, and his end."

Rousseau here summarizes a point of view which I take to be characteristic of the scientific thought of our present generation. To the most advanced minds among the Romans, as among the Hebrews, the imagination could figure no nobler destiny than the continuous rule and continuous aggrandisement of their race:

Virgil

> Hic domus Æneae cunctis dominabitur oris,
> et nati natorum et qui nascentur ab illis.

The Virgilian passage irresistibly recalls the covenant with the father of Israel:

The Covenant with Abram

> Neither shall thy name be called Abram, but thy name shall be Abraham; for a father of many nations have I made thee.
>
> And I will make thee exceeding fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.
>
> And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession.

"An everlasting possession!" The ancient geocentric view of the universe could allow such a conception: an unending race dwelling in an everlastingly fruitful land. But the years have brought us wisdom, and such ideas are now unthinkable. Let us see what the modern conception substitutes.

First, the idea of Mankind, the Human Race, replaces that of a particular race or people. Patriotism gives place to humanitarianism; the destinies of particular nations are of paltry distinction as compared with the destiny of the whole race.

Second, in the hundred and fifty years since Rousseau wrote, the scope of even his humanitarian thought has been far transcended. For the life of the race is no final measure of thought, and now, behind it, before and after, we see the life of the Cosmos. Man's destiny is set against world-destiny, and is become dwarfed in comparison.

The modern measure

Ethical zeal, moral enthusiasm, is possible to the humanitarian view. A man may live for his race, as for his nation, and still find inspiration in his life. And this ideal of devotion to race is, in fact, urged by writers on morals as a motive and reward of sufficient force to give energy even to a sceptical age, and social efficiency to men who have no thought of reward in a life to come.

Devotion to race

But it is a real question whether this moral zeal can persist when men have generally attained the cosmic view of life, at least in the materialistic form. The mental attitude which this view induces is at best one of contemplation, not one of activity. Stoic endurance, never ethical enthusiasm, is the highest mood it permits.

I am aware that this is not universally admitted. There are many who claim to find the spectacle of the Cosmic Machine in itself an inspiration giving worth to men's lives. But I thoroughly believe that where this view is not bombast it is sorry self-deception. Let me quote from a recent expositor of the materialistic world-view:

The Cosmic Machine

It seems to me that the fact of the Conservation of Matter, teaching us that there shall never be one lost atom, nor ever has been—considered with the nebular theory, which teaches us afresh and with the authoritative voice of mathematical science, the lesson of Heraclitus and Herbert Spencer, that the Cosmos pursues an eternal succession of cyclical changes—reveals to the imagination a vista of sheer sublimity. My pen can but adumbrate it, yet surely the reader, accepting the simple statement of matter and energy eternally pursuing this cyclic course, and ever and again giving rise to sentient and reasoning creatures such as himself, may agree with me that here is an Epic indeed.

Mechanism implies Chaos

Now it may be that the doctrine of blind cycles is true, that the last word of Science is indeed uttered, and that a constricted imagination is, in sooth, the proper gauge of reality. It may be that the monstrosity is real; but, if it be so, let us at least be spared the *Epic,* the emotion! To venerate inanity because it is indestructible, a machine because it is huge, a motion because it is perpetual, to abase oneself before Chaos because of its senseless repetitions—this is an incubus too galling! The Hindu with his similar (or identical?) doctrine of the eternal inbreathings and outbreathings of the spirit of Brahm, the everlasting succession of meaningless creation and meaningless destruction, is at all events consistently and patiently pessimistic; comprehending the naked destitution of his philosophy, he comports himself within its proprieties. Have we no right to expect equal grace of Science? There is an abnegation in the acceptance of brute truth as truly brutal which, if it cannot be inspiring, may yet be dignified. In the still reception of the deadly sentence there is manliness; but glorification of one's gallows—this smacks of pitiable braggadocio.

Cruel where cruelty is demanded, Shakespeare did the thing more humanly:

> Ay, but to die and go we know not where;
> To lie in cold obstruction, and to rot;
> This sensible warm motion to become
> A kneaded clod.

Of course, it is not to be dogmatized that the Cosmist's view may not, in some sense, be true to the fact. Human knowledge is too limited even to pronounce against its own limitation. All the laboring ages of mankind may have been fooled in their ideal of overruling powers and destinies. But conceding this, Nature has at least made us what we are, Nature has at least compelled us to such form that human values are the only ones for us; not even the Cosmist escapes this fate. Which so, if we accept the Cosmism, let us, true to ourselves, accept it for what to our view it must be—a hideous huge anarchy, only travestied with the name of law.

Human values are Nature's values

Certainly, the common man will so view it. Human to the core, for him perception that the big dead universe is but meant to thwart him, that he exists but as its idle sport, will only serve to set him in his resolve of snatching from the arch-enemy what good this world can offer. Hard-headed, he will build, as materialism ever compels men to build, not for character which may be eternal, but for the hot success of the hour, the big plunder of the moment:

The common man's view.

> The Bird of Time has but a little way
> To flutter—and the Bird is on the Wing.

Least of all will he be affected by any "sheer sublimity" in the spectacle of disorder, or any poetry in the joyless "Epic" of Chaos. There is poetry in the

melody of a bird's call, in the lithe grace of children at play, in the winsomeness of maids' faces,—there is music and loveliness in these, ephemera though they be. But in an indestructible horde of atoms gyrating through a perpetuity of senseless motions —in this there is only monstrosity.

VI

Contemplation or action

But Æsthetics is not Ethics. The spectacular quality of the world, whether it be the pageant of human history which appealed to Rousseau's imagination or the "Epic" of the Cosmos, has, when all is said, only an æsthetic appeal. It leaves no room for the exercise of other than a contemplative frame of mind; and, granted that such a mental mood may be the *summum bonum* of the Christian mystic, of the Hindu sage, or even of the modern man of science in his most specialized and least human development, it is not passing bounds to maintain that the rule of survival negates any universal recognition of such good as supreme. The race or type of man that is to do the world's work must be one that finds in efficient action the proper realization of life's worth.

The task of mankind

This, it seems to me, is a commonplace of biologic fact. The problem before mankind as a whole is to make this earth as habitable as possible, and for as long a period as possible. The life-instinct itself demands this; and consequently that race which has this instinct in the keenest degree, coupled with ability to adapt environment to the man and the man to environment, is bound to be the race of the Overman. If the recent observations of Mars have not yet demonstrated a Martian population, they have

done something of far more practical significance: they have brought home to us the conception of a mortal race harnessing and economizing all the resources of its natural habitat, maintaining its integrity against desperate odds, and struggling to the last ditch (I will admit the *double entente)* to utilize the chances of life wrung from a parsimonious nature. The Martians

It is obvious that such a struggle—infinitely dwarfing the wars of nations and races—implies a degree of social solidarity not yet foreshadowed, even dimly, in any human society; but it is equally obvious that it is a degree of solidarity to which the Man of the Future must and will attain. Whether that future man is to spring from the black race, the white race, or the brown race, or an amalgamation of races, is the problem confronting us of today; and I believe that it is virtually a question of life-ideals. The type of man, the race of men, that is willing to sacrifice self for others, the present for the future, is the type and race spiritually best fitted for this high place in human destiny. The coming Race

But for such an equipment and such a rôle it is also necessary that each man's life should offer in itself some source of inspiration capable of stirring him to great action, some ideal of human worth and dignity in the order of Nature. The social ideal must be supplemented by an individual reward, for, after all, the work of society is achieved by the aggregate of individual efforts. Balance of social and individual factors

For the exemplification of this balance of social and individual ideals let us turn to ancient life. "A city like an individual," says Aristotle, "has a work to do." And again: "The good of the individual

is identical with the good of the state." Herodotus relates how, when Crœsus asked Solon who was the happiest of men, the sage replied: "Tellus, the Athenian; for in the first place he lived in a well-governed commonwealth; had sons who were virtuous and good, and he saw children born to them all and all surviving; in the next place, when he had lived as happily as the conditions of human affairs will permit, he ended his life in a most glorious manner; for coming to the assistance of the Athenians in a battle with their neighbors of Eleusis, he put the enemy to flight and died nobly." In another connection Herodotus tells of a speech made by Themistocles to the assembled Greeks, about to enter into action at Salamis. The gist of it was, he says, that in all that pertains to human nature and circumstance there is a nobler and a baser side, and it was for them to choose the nobler.

The happiest of men

What that nobler part is appears in various forms throughout Greek history[4]: an ideal of self-respect, issuing in Temperance; an ideal of devotion under the domination of reason,—represented in Homeric times by that αἰδώς or chivalric shame which forbade injury to the weak and helpless, even on the part of the marauder; and in the settled life of the age of cities by ἀρετή, virtue, which found the fullest realization of human personality in a wholly self-conscious and self-respecting devotion to the body politic, a virtue which might induce a man to give up his life to the State even against that other reason in which he maintained his own right as an individual. "Their bodies," says Thucydides of the Athenians,

Greek ideal of nobility

[4] Compare Gilbert Murray, *The Rise of the Greek Epic*, II, III, to which I am indebted for much in this connection.

"they devote to their country as though they belonged to other men; their true self is their mind, which is most truly their own when employed in her service."

Greek political philosophy

Such a conception of life combines and balances the individual and communal elements; or, to put it in psychological terms, gives sufficient share alike to the mind's need for inspiration and its need of action. That this conception could and did develop among the Greeks, was undoubtedly due to the nature of their political and philosophical ideas. To Greek thought the State was no mere abstraction of powers and functions, as with us; rather it was the public household; it was a living body, a vital and energized expression of human *mutuality*. Each man has, as a part of his individual self, a *social self;* each human being is not only an ego, but a part of that solidarity of wills and needs which we call Mankind. Indeed, no man can expunge this social part of his nature and remain a man; it is only the populousness of his imagination that saves for Robinson Crusoe his sanity; man is man only in so far as he is a *moral* being. The Greeks realized this not only in the unconscious laws of conduct which make human society anywhere possible, but they realized it consciously in their civic life, which was for each man an organic part of the living body politic.

Man is man when moral

Moreover, being thorough anthropomorphists, they realized it also in their philosophies. To the Greek mind the World is only a more inclusive Household, a more inclusive State. With the Pythagoreans the central fire of the Cosmos is Hestia, the central Hearth, playing the same rôle in the

The Cosmos of the Pythagoreans

general harmony as the householder's hearth in the building of the home; but Hestia is not only a cosmic hearth, it is also the throne of Zeus, whence proceeds order. Nearly every Greek philosopher conceived the World as a living and developing body, comprising within itself a multitude of lesser living bodies which were no less individual and free because the essence of their freedom lay in ordering their tasks and wills to the Supreme Will of the Whole.

In other words, Greek thought was evolutional, resting upon that very hypothesis of organic development which is today transforming modern thought. In our political life, the strait-jacket of Militarism, man's mastery of his fellow man, has given way to that struggle for the mastery of Nature which we call Industrialism. In thought we may compare this process to the sloughing-off of the strait-jacketing mythic allegory in favor of the more efficient conception of World-Mechanism. But we are not stopping with Mechanism; under the influence of the doctrine of evolution we are acquiring

A living World

once again the conception of the world as living—the world as a vital organism. And has this view not already begun to remould our political ideals, so that, again with the Greeks, we are approaching the ideal of a living social organism under the sway of human reason?

The ideals of Socialism, where these ideals are at all realized, point in this direction: the man's body belongs to the State, but his mind is his true self. "Apart from religion," said Locke, "the end of man is to secure a plenty of the good things of this world, with life, health, and peace to enjoy them." Such a

sentiment is hopelessly antiquated: not that it has no followers today, but that it is certain to have none in the morrow of the race. Unquestionably we have mainly outgrown the ascetic contempt for the "good things of this world," but as unquestionably we are finding, and must find if we are to survive, the supreme good in an ideal of human character which it is the destiny of the race to evolve. We know well that, whether it be a million or a hundred million years hence, the time is coming when our kind will have disappeared from the earth. All the material works of men's hands will have come to naught, as if they had never been; but Man, the high ideal of the worthy human experience and the noble human life, Man's character at its noblest—shall not this have been added as a definite asset and achievement of the Cosmos? Having faith in the truth of Nature, we cannot doubt it.

Character the end of human evolution

VII

Let us clearly understand ourselves. The man of the future is to be one willing to devote himself to the development of an efficient physical life on this Earth. He is to do this, aware that in the course of nature all his material works, all his physical achievements, must come to naught. A dead and ruined planet is the ultimate goal of his physical efforts.

The dead Planet

Now if such end and such result were to be his sole inspiration, I believe and affirm that his rôle would be an impossible one. Only two courses would then be open which human nature, being what it is, could possibly follow. First, that individualistic Hedonism which results in anarchy and decay:

"Let us eat and drink, for tomorrow we die." Second, the race suicide which pessimistic philosophy, whether German or Hindu, demands as the due logic of intelligence: when man realizes the horror of his situation, when instinct falls at last under the domination of intelligence, then life destroys itself, as the sole revenge upon the brutishness of creative forces. This is Schopenhauer's *Ansicht;* and that it is no mere theory, but is based upon actual facts of human psychology, finds daily confirmation in this materialistic and hence pessimistic age. "What's the use?" is the laconic message left by a suicide the other day —a man of scientific training, a physician, one who had every right to believe his life-work valuable if any life-work is of value.

Hedonism and Pessimism

Now what is to save the man and the race of the future from this pessimism and its logical outcome? There is but one thing. The physical life, the life of the great Commune of Man here on earth, must be valued not for its own sake but for the sake of the ideal human character which such a life is to develop. The ideal man and his partial incarnation in individual men—*this* must be the ground of inspiration.

The ideal man

And what does this life and character imply? Surely it means more than a life to be relentlessly snuffed out by the Cosmos which has created it! It has ever been the cue of those who see in the Cosmos a colossal machine grinding out slow fatalities, to summon man to the realization of his own weak, paltry, and precarious being: he is to consider himself the helpless factotum of vain and foolish destinies, in whose whim he must humbly acquiesce.

But such a view of Nature is utterly incompatible with human perpetuity. If the ideal life is to be but a dream, a wraith, a vain chimæra of reasonless Chaos, it can be only meaningless to men's minds; it can inspire no enthusiasm, no effort.

Faith in Nature is trust in God

The man of the future must have faith in Nature. He must believe, as the Greeks believed, that the world is alive, or at least that it is inspired by reason; and he must believe also that his life and what he does with it is important in the plan and purpose of this world-intelligence. In other words, he must believe in and trust a God.

But the individual factor is not yet wholly satisfied. A God for whom this earthly life is a mere spectacle leading to naught beyond, a God whose interest in creation is no better than the appetite of a Roman populace for gladiatorial shows—such a God deserves neither the labor nor the loyalty of the human soul. There must be, in the order of Nature, not only an ethical salvation in this world, but a consummation of the life here begun in a world to come, in order to satisfy reason. Wherefore, the man and the race of the future must have faith in a life in a world to come, belief in human immortality.

Belief in immortality

These two great *Credos* of human history, common to all expressions of the religious instinct—belief in God and belief in immortality—are, I affirm, bound to prevail on the earth. All the teachings of history and biology, every principle of evolution, enforce this view. Races that deny these beliefs must disappear from the earth, in favor of the better-adapted members of their kind.

I am not maintaining any *a priori* certitude that there is a God to whom man's destiny is meaningful,

The Creed of Life

nor that that destiny does not cease with this earthly life. But I do affirm that Nature decrees that the man who survives, the race that persists, must believe these things. They are a part of the equipment of the Fittest to Survive.

Further, I think I may safely add that all natural science and natural law, the order and meaning which man finds in Nature, all that makes a Cosmos rather than a Chaos of the universe, is maniacal illusion unless Nature keep faith with the intelligence which she has generated.

III. THE EVOLUTION OF IDEALS

οὐκ ἔοικε δ' ἡ φύσις ἐπεισοδιώδης οὖσα ἐκ τῶν φαινομένων, ὥσπερ μοχθηρὰ τραγῳδία.

—*Aristotle.*

I

THE history of human thought being taken broadly into account, it is hardly to be doubted that the conception of evolution must be reckoned as the supreme contribution of the Nineteenth Century. It is not merely that evolution has been shown to be the significant fact in the order of Nature, throwing the stress of all interpretation upon the organic side, but (of vastly greater importance) as a conception it has come to be the leading category of our everyday metaphysics. We have grown into the habit of *thinking* evolutionally. We require more than a reference to static fact or to substance and attribute to satisfy our intellectual needs. For full understandings we demand an end and a purpose as well as a cause or source; we demand a development, a life-history. Indeed, the life-history has come to be the unit regulating all our estimates of completeness and propriety, be our concern a solar system, a physical organism, a political party, or an idea.

Evolution a category of modern thinking

Now evolution, as a category, is nothing short of downright negation of the rather smug idealisms of former times, with their reposeful faiths in definite and retainable Utopias. Evolution denies retainability. It refuses to allow any rest whatever. Eter-

nal volancy, eternal expectancy, eternal promise,—in these is its essence. So, in the realm of ideas, where once a stable and ponderous Truth was the exalted hoped-for, now—strange shifting!—insatiate Aspiration is seen to be inevitable. Paradoxically enough, it is seen, too, to be the one fit and appropriate form of mental life and the one possible satisfaction of mental need.

Aspiration the form of mental life

Yet if evolution is the gist of the natural process, the texture of reality, with aspiration for its psychical sign, whence, we ask, the old ideal of a static Truth? Whence arose the strange paradox of a mental life at variance with the essential principle of Nature?

The full interest of the problem appears only when we realize the immense and straining effort to which Nature must have been subjected in the bringing forth of Mind. For Mind, is, so to speak, sundered from the parent being and established more or less at cross-purposes to it. It has achieved for itself a kind of hegemony, mainly by dint of a growing aloofness from Nature, engendering and evidenced in the paradoxical difference of Truth and Fact, of Ideal and Real. Now, however, in the Mind's maturity, there are signs of a coming *rapprochement* with Nature and of mutual understanding. Essentially this is only the Mind's understanding of itself, for Nature, as we know her, is merely the human habitation, fitted to life as closely as shell to mollusc. Accordingly, Natural History in its inner and true significance is the history of the evolution of human ideals, and in this history is our sole norm of intelligibility and our sole and proper index to the world's character.

Mind and Nature

II

To get at the primitive quality of Nature we must abstract, as far as possible, all that constitutes the organization of our knowledge, in perception as well as in thought. There is a pre-natal life of the intelligence which it is our business to approximate, and only as we succeed in this shall we be able to grasp the *stoffliche* substance of reality. In that old life there is a kind of maternal warmth and nearness of experience, life engrossed in the sensuous caress. So far as we are able to judge, all the lower animals live in immediacy. It is the present hunger that makes zestful the hunt, the sniff of present danger that urges flight, the satiety of present browsings that lures to shady repose; the amours of the mating season are the fresh creation of each recurring spring, and the nestling of today is the foe and rival of tomorrow. Foresight, prevision, the thought which represents to the mind something not in the immediate or incipient environment, are absent from the animal consciousness, and so there is no continuity of the conscious experience; there is only a kaleidoscopic succession of momentary nows and heres, each dependent for its quality upon the vivacity of attendant sensation.

Primitive consciousness

But this primitive experience is not monotonous. Enlivened by Nature's whimsey and sport, it is endowed with a native picturesqueness. The merest sensation involves a play of sensation; from the very beginning mind is impressionable; changefulness, a certain prismatic character, is its chief first token. Distinction of mood,—hunger, fear, rage, desire, fondling, frolic,—are already differentiating mental

quality and laying the foundations of Intelligence.

Natural selection of impressions

Correlative with the natural selection of traits in the physical series, there is, in the mental, a natural selection of impressions. Susceptibility to certain perceptions, readiness for certain mental reactions, are as important factors in evolutional security as efficient horns or an adaptable pair of heels. And just as horns are pronged or coiled and heels hoofed or splay to suit natural exigencies, so impressions are chosen, ordered and fixed, in bringing to pass the proportionate anatomy of the mind.

Economy of attention

Of the multitude of sensations and feelings continuously assailing consciousness, the greater portion are but objects of idle curiosity, a few only are of vital interest. Whether the wind blow east or west is of little account to the grazing herd, save it blow toward or from a possible covert of huntsmen; the scent of danger is the one important impression for which all else must be neglected. In the long run, survival depends upon power to give exclusive heed to significant hints and signs. This is the *raison d'être* of that intensity and narrowness of perception which we note in the lower animals and the lower races of man. An African explorer has observed that the natives while keenly alive to signs of the trail which to European eyes are invisible, are yet oblivious to the larger, and to the European wholly impressive, natural features: and Darwin, on his famous voyage, made note that the Fuegians were immensely impressed with the boats of the white man's ships, which at least came within the genus of their dug-out canoes, while to the ships themselves they were indifferent or took them for granted. In the natural state life-interests are too

precariously suited to circumstance to permit mental breadth or freedom. Perceptions are specialized to the present, and the mind made bond of the hour.

Instinct and ideas agents of freedom

Instinct, with its huge economies of mental energy, is the first agent of freedom. But instinct is confined to the elementary and constant factors of experience, and, automatic and inelastic as it should be, it is incapable of serving other ends than its proper automatisms. True deliverance is possible only when *ideas* appear which are able to disengage themselves from the immediacy of sense and stand apart as *entia rationis,* as in a way veritable substances. The appearance of such ideas is the most significant event in the whole history of the mind's growth. Doubtless there pre-exists a need which gives them birth, a sort of blind striving of the sensuous consciousness and a general orientation of mind in preparation for thought; but for all this, the ideas come into being only through strain and effort commensurate with the metamorphosis.

Evidence is afforded by the primitive wonder in the mere power of abstraction as shown in the magical potencies ascribed to abstract ideas. When all Nature is viewed as living Nature, all the varied display of physical creation is conceived as endowed with as varied a spiritual being. But if things are living powers, gifted each with its own natural magic, how shall ideas, with ubiquities, powers, and prophecies, a hundredfold more impressive be less living? Of course the question is not baldly put; none the less it is felt and satisfied. At the first the idea is an image, but it is also much more than this. It is an image whose verisimilitude reveals its real being as its ubiquity reveals its spiritual nature. It

Natural magic

is, in fact, a kind of soul. Eidolon, phantasm, simulacrum, whatever its sensuous being, it is imbued with the life of that which it represents, and is not to be reckoned with except as a true natural power.

Similia similibus

Imitations, however crude, are primitively conceived as possessing the aptitudes of their originals. Ceremonial dances, whether of war or the hunt, seed-time or harvest, are invariably imitative or symbolic; if an enemy is to be overthrown, he is slain first in mock combat; if a harvest is desired, the dancers adorn themselves with emblems of its fullness: the ceremony is always an *abstract* of the event expected. So, too, the painted symbols upon the face or weapons of the Red Indian are not mere tokens; they are powerful "medicine" for the confounding of enemies. Like powers are in the ideal image; only it, being veritable spirit, is the superior agency. Ere the Indian youth is initiated to man's estate, he fasts until in a vision he beholds the image of that, be it animate beast or animate thing, which is thenceforth to be his "medicine," his familiar, the guiding idea of his individual being. With its likeness he adorns his war-lock; he paints its image on his teepee; as sacredly as the totem of his clan, he obeys its taboos and laws, until at last it becomes a part of his proper self and the measure of his personality.

"Medicine"

Thought is thus at first, because of its sensuous splendor, a kind of living heraldry of the soul. Yet just on account of the brilliancy of its blazonry, it is not wholly free, not nimble nor adept. It may serve to bring into being all the wonderful fauna of mythic nature, dryad and hamadryad, nymph

and genius and composite beast, but the swift, true grasp of essences is yet wanting. To know the keen zest of dialectic, it has still to pierce the dazzle of poetic imagery.

Among the earliest instances of that abstruser form of conception which makes dialectic possible are notions of number. The first really comprehensive philosophy of the Greeks—the Pythagorean—was an indeavor to find the essential natures of things in numerical relations. But the human mind had not yet attained to the conception of pure essence, pure abstraction, and accordingly the Pythagorean Numbers were not only essences but powers and deities as well. A geometric figure, the pentagram, was the symbol of the brotherhood and at the same time a talisman of magical efficiency; the heavenly spheres, moving in just proportion, give forth a celestial harmony which is the soul of the universe; the One, the Monad, is a Supreme Being, in a pantheon of divine Numbers.

Pythagorean Numbers

Number, indeed, represents a first insight into Nature's law and order. At the very emergence of intelligence, fourfold direction, the four quarters of the earth, are fixed in the diviner's cross or swastika, while the science of the calendar is the earliest of sciences. To mathematics, as the beginning of abstraction, attaches all that peculiar veneration of the fixed and orderly which we of today accord to the notion of Natural Law. Nature as revealed in Law is Nature depersonalized; it is Nature as inexorable Destiny rather than placable Whim, and though we are long accustomed to this conception, it was, at the birth of science, an insight utterly unique, hence a fit theme of superstitious awe.

Natural Law

The joy of dialectic

The dialectic instinct once awakened, general conceptions of all sorts spring into being. The keen Greek joy in this young dialectic is for us, in the gray years of thought, only to be vaguely inferred from remembered delights in the firstlings of our own youthful insights, and even so we must reckon in the centuries of conventionalizing which have rendered chill and austere ideas that were to the Greek mind gloriously fresh and plastic. Of course it was in the mind of Plato that ideas achieved apotheosis. But Plato, I think, is to be taken, not as one apart, but as the logical expositor of the idealizing trend of the human mind. Thoroughly Greek, Plato is not merely Greek. He is the idealist of all time because he expresses so winningly the mind's naïve first reverence for its own diviner part. The Ideas, indeed, seemed to Plato so essentially superhuman that he could not credit a mere mortal's right to them. They were to him veritable divinities forming an august assemblage incomparably more lofty than Olympus. They were patterns and archetypes, supreme perfections, which the human soul sees as through a glass darkly, and which the whole created world strives with desperate dumb longing to appropriate into its being. This, in fact, is the reason of the world's being. The World of Ideas purely through its surpassing perfection evokes from the very Void itself an emulous shadow of its reality. The ache of Ideal plenum is too intense for solitary Heaven to endure till the consuming desire of the counterworld of fact springs up to give it ease.

Platonic Ideas

So convinced was Plato of the divine nature of Ideas that he could only account for human knowledge of them as acquired by recollection of knowl-

edge gained in some previous, nobler, more spiritual mode of being. The soul in its moments of recollection is "like a bird fluttering up, careless of the world below" and he whose initiation into this world is recent, "is amazed when he sees anyone having a godlike face or form, which is the expression or imitation of divine Beauty; and at first a shudder runs through him and some misgiving of a former world steals over him; then looking upon the face of his beloved as of a god he reverences him, and if he were not afraid of being thought a downright madman, he would sacrifice to his beloved as to the image of a god."

Phædrus 251a

It is not other than the Platonizing instinct which inspires men everywhere, in the dawn of mental life, to deify the conceptions which dominate their actions. The Christian virtues, Faith, Hope and Charity, are hardly less personal than the Roman deities Bellona and Fortuna, Fides and Amor. Nor are these abstractions less real than the potent ancestral species, or "elder brothers," which the American Indians conceive as the parents and protectors of all living kinds: the "elder brother" of moose is a giant, spirit Moose, of the bears an archetypal Bear, of buffaloes a manitou Buffalo animating the prairie herds. So also the rain gods and wind gods, the earth gods and water gods and fire gods, the sun gods and moon gods, found in all paganisms and filling all pantheons, are but the vivid dramatizations of form-compelling thought.

The Elders of the Kinds

Every lasting idea is the result of a building up and subsequent compression of many related impressions. As in the physical world organs come into being by a long process of selective adaptation,

so in the mental the natural selection of impressions creates ideas. The elemental conceptions first to appear are crystallizations of the immemorial experiences of the race and are thus in a more than Platonic sense true recollections. They constitute a subjective index of evolution, being, one might say, the patent incarnation of Nature's intention in bringing conscious life to pass. They represent those facts in the order of the world which are important to conscious being and are meant to enter into the house of thought. And coming as intensifications of the most ancient and vital of all impressions, it is little wonder, as it is wholly appropriate, that the mind, in the intoxicating hour of its initiation, should deem them revelations of more than mortal meaning. So it is that we find them gods of primitive men, who thus instinctively make supreme such of their experiences as must lift them above the brute. Nor can it be doubted that in such an instinct we have the just expression of natural destiny, pointing the eventual freedom of the mind.

Ideas incarnate Nature's purpose

III

There is an inveterate tendency of mankind, which no science can wholly disillusion, to hark back to the Golden Age. No matter how wretched and decadent, there is scarce a tribe the world over but recalls some former Eden, some Earthly Paradise, blessed with the clearest of rivers and the plentifullest fruitage and game; and no matter how drugged and lethargized by material prosperity, there is not a people but remembers Heroic Days when all its men were valiant and all its women

The Golden Age

fair. The explanation is patent. Idealization is instinctive, but the ideal estate is ever at odds with reality, and so gives rise to the fundamental contradiction which the human mind is ceaselessly endeavoring to surmount. The barbarian, from the very vividness of his conception, is unable, as the civilized man is loth, to admit the unreality of the ideal, and so both agree in relegating to the past what the present denies. The dream of the Golden Age springs invincibly from the homing instinct of the imagination.

Utopia is thus less a memory than a prophecy, gauging the mental stature of its creators and forecasting their attainment. At the same time, with the more sophisticated races, there is a true sense in which the Golden Age is an age of the past, and that is in so far as it is the age of poetry. I do not mean that all poetry is now overpassed, but there is a prelogical period of mental history which is wholly poetic. When thought first emerges from sensation, ideas are still sensuous in texture; though they differ from sense in possessing a significance felt to be other than immediate, they share in its intuitive reality. Life other than in the concrete present is no easy achievement. Myriads of ages of hand-to-mouth existence have inbred the conviction of the superior reality of what is immediately present, and ideas, to gain the least initial prestige, were forced to appear in the guise of present being, as sensuous images. In order that abstract thought might exist at all it had first to compete with sense-perception in its own likeness and to make itself more interesting than sense-perception.

The Age of Poetry

This is doubtless the bionomic reason for the fact

Credulity

that savage men are indefinitely credulous of what they can understand, or image, and equally sceptical of what transcends their experience. Of African natives, an observer writes: "Their imaginations become so lively that they can scarcely distinguish between their dreams and their waking thoughts, between the real and the ideal, and they consequently utter falsehood without intending, and profess to see things which never existed." Tylor relates: "When the Russians in Siberia listened to the talk of the rude Kirgis, they stood amazed at the barbarians' ceaseless flow of poetic improvisation, and exclaimed: 'Whatever these people see gives birth to fancies.'" The same trait is found in all primitive thinking, which thus appears in a *dramatic mood*. In a kind of natural realism of the imagination, it gives credence to whatever presents itself in the likeness of sense. The mood is the poetic mood of poets who are simple and clear-eyed in the old instinctive way of the ballad-makers. It is also the mood of objective reason and of those odd dream-lapses into the life of the past which sometimes amaze us by their explicitness and point.

The dramatic mood of thought

Doubtless, at the first, language was a powerful aid in this dramatization of ideas. "The mere fact," says Tylor, "of its individualizing in words such notions as winter and summer, cold and heat, war and peace, vice and virtue, gives the myth-maker the means of imagining these thoughts as personal beings." But language is also the main or exclusive agent for freeing the mind from the discursiveness and indirection of allegorical thinking. The word is a potent builder of myth; but myth itself, by its fixity and interplay of element, tends to conven-

Language

tionalize ideas. The mythic hero, the personified dawn, the god, the deed, enter into the mind's habitual furnishing and eventually become the stock symbols of thought. To be sure, there must be some facility of conception before any myth is possible, but with this attained, the mind is speedily induced to pass from the dramatic to the *reflective mood* of thought, from poetry to philosophy; 'tis but a scant transition from Hesiod to Thales. The reflective mood finds its warrant in utility rather than in attractiveness. Its business is to systematize. If imagination is the faculty which has lifted man above the time-serving brute, making possible his insight into what lies behind the screen of sensation, reflection is the instrument by means of which we rear the wonderful structure of human knowledge; its keenness measures possible science, its flexibility determines mental evolution.

The reflective mood

There are two habits or modes of thought essential to all reflection which are responsible for the main puzzle of philosophy and the inherent contradictoriness of reason. The antithesis to which they give rise has been variously designated. With the Greeks it was the contradiction of the one and the many, of being and becoming; with moderns it is the problem of identity in difference, or, in natural science, of uniformity and variation. All these antitheticals arise from contemplation of the *thing,* that which suffers change yet remains self-identical. In the mind's history the puzzle has found various solutions. In æsthetics reconciliation is effected by the notion of harmony; in psychology, by the conception of personality; in natural science, by the doctrine of evolution.

Notion of *thing*

Laws of thought

The two habits are the instinct for identification, or the psychical experience of recognition, and the instinct for ascribing causes, due to experience of volition,—that is, the powers of thinking and willing, which in joint operation constitute human efficiency. It is the instinct of causal thinking which induces the primitive mind to animate all Nature with will and intention. It is the instinct for forming definite and responsible estimates of things which leads to those composite impressions that we call ideas. The strength of the instinct for causes appears in the ready ascription of magical powers to these. The intensity of the effort to create a fixed mental furniture, a store of definite and accountable ideas, appears in the impulsive erection of general notions into real entities. From interplay of the two arise dynamic or deified conceptions, gods of the morning, noon and evening sun, of the sowing, the young vegetation, and the harvest, of the time for making war and the time for making peace,—Horus, Ra, and Tum; Semele, Dionysus, and Demeter; Mars and Quirinus,—all those nodes of mythic interest through which the natural classification of experience has been perfected.

Deifications

Sophist 247e

The supreme instance of this happy congruence is the Platonic philosophy of Ideas or ideal forms which are at once the essential being and the formative causes of phenomena. "The boundary and definition of being is none other than power," and Ideas, the most real, are also the most dynamic of beings. They are more than mere types or patterns; they are "souls," personalities, ideal individuals. Here, already, is foreshadowed the modern solution

which finds in the individual the one abiding reality, though abiding only because its nature is to change and grow. The difference between this and the mere symbol is the difference between Everyman and Hamlet. In the one the experience is purely symbolic, typical of *"every man's"*; in the other the experience, still broad as humanity, is yet the one possible experience of the one soul, its avatar; Everyman is an ideal type, Hamlet an ideal individual.

Type versus Individual

Thinking in terms of individuality is, however, a late achievement of mankind. There is a long communal period beforehand. It was no light task for the human mind to master the more elemental and necessary ideal identities. These, as I have said, exist more or less at cross-purposes with reality. It is their nature and utility to be fixed and constant; it is the nature of reality to be ever changing. There are no such things as genera and species, at least in their nude abstraction, outside the mind of man; yet it is by means of genera and species that all our knowledge is co-ordinated. It is by dint of ideal integers, for example, that bank accounts are balanced; it is by comparison with the ideal husband, composite of all husbandly virtues, that real husbands are assorted and valued. Certain samenesses must be assumed in reality and precipitated in thought before any reasoning may take place. If this process gives the lie to truth, making it, because of its very constancy, untrue, it still has the sufficient plea of vast utility.

Genera and species

In magic, the science of primitive men, the evolution of the category is already well under way. Says Lang: "Among savages the belief that like

Imitative magic

produces like is exemplified by many practices. The New Caledonians, when they wish their yam plots to be fertile, bury in them with mystic ceremonies certain stones which are naturally shaped like yams. . . . . When the Bushmen want wet weather they light fires, believing that the black smoke clouds will attract black rain clouds; while the Zulus sacrifice black cattle to attract black clouds of rain. . . The custom of making a wax statuette of an enemy, and piercing it with pins or melting it before the fire, so that the detested person might waste as his semblance melted, was common in mediæval Europe, was known to Plato, and is practiced by the Negroes."[1] If Thomas Hardy is to be trusted, this practice has hardly yet disappeared from England, where it must have been familiar in Shakespeare's time:

Invultuation

> "Have I not hideous death within my view,
> Retaining but a quantity of life
> Which bleeds away, even as a form of wax
> Resolveth from his figure, 'gainst the fire."

The idea of causal connection underlying such rites is made explicit in the Babylonian incantation:

> As these images tremble, dissolve, and melt away,
> So may the sorcerer tremble, dissolve, and melt away.

Althæa and Meleager

The brand which typifies the life of Meleager and whose burning causes his death is a classical instance of the like belief, as burning in effigy is doubtless a modern survival. The analogy of fire and life—alike in their evanescence, in their cease-

[1] "When therefore men secretly suspect each other at the sight of, say, waxen images fixed either at their doors or at the cross-ways or at the tombs of their parents, it is no good telling them to make light of such things because they know nothing certain about them."—Plato, *Laws*, 933 (Jowett).

less onstriving activity, in their association with light and power, in their apparent beginning and ending in naught,—is one of the most powerful of magical and religious motives. The perpetual fire guarded by the Vestals at Rome and by the Virgins of the Sun at Cuzco symbolized the life of the city and the state, as the hearth-fire is the symbol of the life of the household and the altar of its worship. The Parsis have erected such a symbolism into a religion, and it is an essential part of the religion of many of the tribes of North America. Says an Indian teacher:

Sacred fire

> Henceforth the fire must never be suffered to go out in your lodge. Summer and winter, day and night, in the storm or when it is calm, you must remember that the life in your body and the fire in your lodge are the same and of the same date. If you suffer your fire to be extinguished at that moment your life will be at its end.

Keokuk quoted

Thus we see from the beginning evidences of that intense search for analogies which is the key to the development of human thought. The whole later aspect of the mind bristles with illustrations of the impressiveness of these ideal identities. It appears in the councils and inquisitions which have banned and anathematized dissimilar—heterodox—thinking. It is the rationale of classificatory sciences, based on analogical characters. It is the intellectual motive of those strange, irrational Monisms, Henisms, and Materialisms, which seek to reduce to some essential One a universe which is so palpably a multitude.

Nor can there be doubt that the inveterate conservatism natural to a complex being has vastly aided this ideal concentration. Novelty, whether in

environment or thought, is instinctively shunned by a not over-adaptable animal, and the savage finds reason a too incommensurable instrument to be handily employed. He prefers trust in the surety of instinct and custom. His thinking is so governed by the specific instance that it takes the form of a kind of mental ritual or cult of ideas; and since thinking is essentially a social phenomenon, whether between different minds or the same mind's different moods, it readily succumbs to ritualistic influences. Indeed, the chief business of cult and rite appears to be definition and conservation of ideas. Tribal traditions and ceremonies are the books of untutored peoples and the storehouses of their accumulated experiences. Just as the child's imitative play is his natural work, yielding him future facility in the real stress of life, so the imitative dances and ceremonials of primitive men are the beginnings of social training. The taboos, or prohibitions, by which savages protect game during the close season or forbid marriage within the family are enforced by a moral imperative stronger than the civilized conscience and are no less truly instinctive gropings after natural law than the establishments of meanings by the symbolisms of tribal mysteries are instinctive assimilations of the forms of thought. All the ordinances of tribal life are, psychologically speaking, but fixations of meanings whose stability is attested by the slowness of their erosion,—forming, as they still do, much of the "color" of what passes as modern thought.

Ritual thinking

Taboo

IV

So far we have sketched the beginnings of recog-

nition and the establishment of fixed conceptions as tools of reflective thought. There remains to treat the emergence of personality as the principle of explanation.

Personality a principle of explanation

Sociologists tell us that social pressure everywhere results in "like-mindedness." In the formative period of society it is essential that individuals should act according to common understandings which are the natural prelude of law. The agency of their attainment (granted the community of feeling and appetite which a common human nature presupposes) appears to be the *strong man* or hero. The individual who succeeds in most widely impressing his personality upon his fellows becomes the ethnic ideal or type toward which they trend. Abraham, Herakles, Romulus, Beowulf, Arthur—each binds together in a single personality the ideal traits of a race. Each represents the like thought of all the young men and maids of his folk, the pattern of their emulation and their heart's desire.

Hero Worship

Hero-worship has certainly had a deal to do with the humanizing of the species. The hero is the first conscious formulation of an end of evolution. He is already the better self of those whose admiration he excites and who to the extent of their power approximate to his likeness. By its very suggestiveness his personality dominates theirs, measuring in his attainment their possibility. The discrepancy, however, is keenly felt, and there is no more pathetic abnegation in human history nor any severer arraignment of average futility than the ascription by primitive folk of an immortality to their heroes which they deem themselves unworthy to share; it is only Elijahs who are snatched up into Heaven.

Psychic prowess

Primarily the hero is a chieftain. That is to say, he is a man exalted above his fellows not only by prowess and wisdom, but by a subtler, more occult endowment. In primitive belief every man is gifted with a natural potency due to his nature such as it is. But some men possess a higher potentiality of this sort than others, whom they are thus able to sway. The warrior is victor not because of superior skill or craft, but because his magic outweighs that of his enemy. If he fall victim, the reverse is true, and it is accordingly his anxious interest to fortify in every possible way his occult powers. Now the chieftain is a man more highly "charged" than his tribesmen, and it is by virtue of his surplus potency that he rules. It is his to lay and lift taboos, his to "smell out" and punish evildoers, his to reward or despoil. He is the incarnate law exercising a sovereignty more intangible and powerful than any in modern culture.

Mana of The dead

The fact that the chieftain's power springs from no mere physical prowess is attested not only by his wizardly offices, by his erection to demi-godship,—or even, as Egyptian kings and Roman emperors, to godship,—but most irrefutably by loyalty to his still living personality after death. Indeed, death seems rather to increase than diminish his potency; freed from the flesh there is little to let or hinder the play of spiritual powers. Manes-worship is perhaps the most ancient of religious venerations. Certainly it is a fact of no light significance that the vast laborious monuments—cairn and cromlech, dolmen and menhir—erected by prehistoric centuries of men are mainly monuments to the dead. No house of the living rivals the pyramid

Megalithic tombs

of Cheops; and no labor for the living counts a tithe of the ancient labors for the dead. There could be no more telling gauge of the intensity of the mental stress to which mankind was subjected in the process of social fusion than the spectacle of naked neolithic savages hewing out and lifting up the cyclopean avenues of megaliths on the plains of Brittany, or of the sweltering multitudes of Egypt toiling the huge toil of the pyramids. In the old monuments we are presented with a veritable embalmment of a period of mental history, the vastness of their dead weight furnishing the proportional of the might of the living idea that demanded their erection.

The Pyramids

The case of Egypt, where the passion for mere mass reaches acme, is particularly enlightening, for here we seem to see an instance of Nature overreaching her own intention. The mightiness of Egypt's monuments is no more striking than the inertia of Egypt's ideals, the mummied perpetuity of the thoughts and institutions of the land whose one book is the Book of the Dead. It is as if the social consciousness, wakened and focused in the dynasties of the pyramids, had fused and fixed past all dissolution the possibilities of Egyptian nature. Thereafter was never any chance for growth, never opportunity for the democratization of thought.

Egypt

Every civilization creates its own cult of ideas and establishes its own norm of conduct and character. In the era of beginnings it is hardly to be doubted that autocratic centralization is the inevitable instrument for the fixation of these. Yet if there is to be growth, the community of civilization can serve only as a starting-point for differentiations; the net asset of traits which makes the com-

Civilization a cult of ideas

munal individual or racial personality should not be allowed to exhaust the race's possibilities, but should serve merely as a basis for sympathy with individual developments. Egypt and China furnish instances of peoples balked of this natural development; in each case the social autocracy overpowered the individual bent, perhaps because of the very intensity of the social fusion, and consequently only a type, or race personality came into being.

Harmony and universality in the Classic

For the happier development we look to classicism. It is true that the classic ideal, no less than the convention and ritual of Egypt, is a caste ideal, a demand for like-thought, identity, unity; but it is expression of this ideal in a far truer mode. The classic type is not an inanimate, weighted type; its very essence is buoyancy and life; it not only identifies Being but it achieves Becoming and so is imbued with evolutional vitality. Harmony, universality, and temperate mastery are its key-notes. We have seen how these are exemplified in Plato's Ideas, which are universal as being the essences each of some natural kind or species, harmonious as perfect in their individual natures while uniting in one guise a manifold of instances, and masterful as being the causal prototypes of all partial realizations in the physical world. Here first we have true individuals in the ideal world; they are universal individuals, personalities, archons of the mind; and just as the Homeric Olympus is the visible habitat of Hellenic imagination, so is the Platonic Hierarchy of Ideals the full revelation of the conceptual and moral consciousness of classic character.

True individuals

But even so, no last development of personality is yet attained. The classic ideal defeats by its very

perfection. The fullness of its realization denies evolution. Even its activity is a kind of rest; it is a contemplative, imitative activity, the "unmoving activity" of Aristotle. The beauty of the Greek temple, in its utter attainment, has been contrasted with the beauty of the Gothic cathedral, in its utter aspiration. No analogy could better emphasize the peril of classicism. Its perfection pronounces its doom; for perfection is won only through restraint, through studied and explored law and form,—and a *dominating* care for form but too insidiously develops into formalism, into a *perverse* care for form. Lack of restraint, profusion, a kind of Titanic zest of endeavor, give to Gothic art the wild and imperfect beauty that can readily fall into the grotesque but may occasionally rise into the sublime; it is the type of beauty which makes Nature wonderful and which we feel, instinctively, must somehow be the eternal type. Classic humanism at its best gives us the noble measure of human achievement; but it is pervaded by a Pindaric weakness for "the things of mortals," and if man is ever to pass beyond his mere mortality it must be in another than the classic mode. This is shown only too clearly in the historic development. Classic domination of form and thought degenerates into Procrustean measurement. The stir and tremor of growth is yet denied, and so the richness of promise. These come only with imperfection and freedom. Only to imperfect things is freedom meaningful, and only to free desire is promise sweet.

Fatal perfection

Only the imperfect is free

V

Nature is never long content with fixity. Her

significant fact is her constant bringing forth of new life, her boundless evolutional energy. The social forces that make for the consolidation of human experience and the establishment of communal like-mindedness are continually offset by individual idiosyncrasies. There is an energy of growth ever straining the leash of mortal circumstance, and the individual's feeling of constraint under social domination and his hunger for a larger and richer experience are its proper subjective signs.

Predestined rebels

We look with a kind of wonder upon the suicidal zeal of reformers such as Bruno and Roger Bacon, upon the intellectual intoxication of minds such as those of Paracelsus and Spinoza, yet if we consider them in the broad light of Nature's way, their very perversities are seen to be her necessary expression. They are predestined to rebellion; the purpose of their creation is their breaking with established conceits.

Human instinct for a freer life is thus the inner form of Nature's irrepressible expansion. No perfection is won except to be destroyed, except to be followed by new anticipations and new ideals. These new ideals often seem to us erratic, and for this reason we frequently meet in the history of thought as in the histories of nations, eras of seeming degeneration and dullness wherein the meanings of the old masters are lost and a one-sided enthusiasm replaces the symmetry of whole conceptions. But such periods always result in the long

Progress

run in a return to the satisfying full view with some added insight and elevation of meaning; and it is for this reason that history has been likened to a spiral progression, the measure of advance being the

added altitude, the added comprehensiveness of the standpoint won.

In the first revolt against convention, the likeliest creed of the revolutionary spirit is glorification of the flesh. The cramp and restraint of law become unbearable and long-pent impulses, irrepressible at last, break forth in the riot of sense. After Rome come the barbarians, and the world is seemingly broken up just for the remaking.

"Back to Nature!" is the slogan of the epoch, and by Nature is meant that frank avowal of naked whim which it has been the long schooling of reason to suppress. Licence is the order of the day and Unreason is its lord. Illustration is furnished by those paroxysms of orgiastic worship whereby the Asiatics sought in the madness of sense to rise above the obliterations of self and personality entailed by their crushing despotisms—worships which gradually penetrated Greece and Rome as their peoples more and more fell in thrall to the tyranny of the state. Illustration is afforded again by the "ghost dance" craze of the American Indians, a ceremonial in which the Red Men seek to free themselves from the oppressive visitation of the white man's culture, and, in a past revivified, to live once more the old life of their race. Illustration in a third mode is the mystic and ascetic struggle for intuitions transcending sense and reason, alike paltry to its view. The Bacchanalian orgy, the ghost dance, the mystic communion of the Quietist,—all are efforts to overleap the boundaries of time and grasp for the present need the elusive substance of reality.

"Back to Nature"

Mysticism

The creed, the rationale, one might almost say the gist of such effort is realism. It is reaction

against the futility of reason, and of the ideal which is reason's essence, and it is endeavor to achieve tangible contact with real being, to appropriate in the compass of the individual something of the larger life of Nature. After long domination classicism lapses into formalism. The living essence of reality is lost, and the mind concerns itself with meaningless repetitions. The revolt from this, the return to Nature, is realism, which conceives itself as an effort to apprehend the world as it actually is, and which is in fact an endeavor to obtain a new and significant point of view with respect to Nature and so to furnish the basis for the development of a new idealism.

Realism

It is true that in aiming to treat fact without bias realism misses the fact, as must ever be in a humanly constituted world. The reality of things is their significance and the being of significance is promise. Our very perceptions are biases; and what we name "facts" are but situations seized and defined with reference to some perceptual interest. Back of all our material experience are those complexities of interest, inherital and creative, which color the present with the prejudices of the past and with those hopes for the future which it is the office of "facts" and "things" to make precise and stimulating. Hence, like every form of living in immediacy, realism defeats itself; at its own valuation it is contradiction and sham. Its practice, however, is better than its understanding. No activity is possible without the exercise of selective power, and selection is the beginning of idealization. Realism brings to its selective activity a sincere and recipient mood. The nature of the realist determines the

Reality is significance

choice and fashioning of the material. Thus the most literal imitation is in some degree idealization, colored at least by that racial recollection which is the form of the mind and so sharing the general trend of development of which this form is the expression and index.

Return to human nature

So, in last analysis, return to Nature is return to human nature. It is the renewal of that reliance upon personal inspiration which classicism tempers with a certain impersonal austerity and which ritualized classicism, or formalism, utterly snuffs out. "A cynic might say," says Bosanquet, "that the history of philosophy is a process in which the meaning of Plato and Aristotle is periodically forgotten by their disciples and rediscovered by their antagonists." This is perhaps more than a cynical truth. For is not the meaning of Plato and Aristotle an eternal restiveness of the creative instinct, satisfied only in the evolution of new patterns of desire? And is not this the necessary and perpetual discovery of every revolt to Nature when brought to its final self-realization?

The patterns of desire

With the attainment of this insight there is always reaction from the blindness of mere realism. There is awakened a better consciousness of values and a higher self-respect. The fruit of these is that chastening of the sense and purgation of the passions which is the beginning of spiritual freedom. Sometimes, to be sure, the first awakening comes in the guise of romanticism, which, however earnest and beautiful in the age when chivalry and Christian humanhood were in the making, is nowadays but a lazy and superficial idealism; yet, in the end, this always gives way to an impulsive and vigorous

generation of types, the subjective token of a hale mental growth and the proper rationality of existence.

VI

Mental history is thus the significant content of evolution, and the scope and character of the mind's operations under the varying dominations of moulding influences give us our final clue to Nature. "Her phenomena show," says Aristotle, "that Nature is not, like an ill-made tragedy, a string of episodes"; and what Nature *is,* her inner plot and action, the mind itself necessarily reflects. For the very being of mind is, in a sense, recapitulation of its own creation, and viewed genetically it may be expected therefore to point its own natural destiny. That which it may be shown to have brought and to be bringing to pass is that for which we must surmise it came to be.

Metaphysics 1090b

To gain some conception of this process has been the purpose of my essay, and the general result of the enquiry may now be stated. *The evolution of the ideal life is a gradual initiation of intelligence into Nature's secret ways to the end that personalities shall be created which are efficient both to understand and to aid the natural development.*

Ideal Evolution is an initiation

That such personalities might be free and capable agents it was essential that they be given a being apart from and more or less out of accord with the main course of creation. They were, in other words, to become minor creators in the whole of creation. This seeming miracle is what Nature achieves in the generation of an idealizing intelligence capable in some degree of forestalling her own operations.

Résumé

It is worth while briefly to resume the steps of the process. In the beginning we found consciousness in thrall to an utterly mobile and whimsical reality. There was naught but the ceaseless play of feeling and sense, the flux and flow of the Heracliteans. Slowly, by dint of instinct first, time-bridging experience came into being; identities were established, and the foundation of ideal permanence was laid. Thereafter was the tremendous fusion and refusion of these identities under the driving impulsion of the social instinct, until at last an immobility of culture—in some cases never to be overcome—had given (to communes and peoples) at least the external form of individuality. With this apotheosis of sameness the extreme disaccord of Nature and intelligence is reached. The ideal structure in its fixity is at absolute variance with Nature in her change, and Plato in despair of reconciliation cleaves the ideal world wholly from the real. But the fixity has been established only for the safeguarding of an aggressive and growing individuality which must pursue its way wholly aloof from mere phenomenality if it is to attain permanence and personality. The gradual emancipation and democratization of thought is the carrying on of this development. We have seen it pursue its various dialectic: in art, passing from the first idealism to classicism, thence through ritualism to realism and renewed idealism; in philosophy, passing from personified whim to the notion of Nature's constancy and law, and finally to Nature's purpose and ideality; in science, progressing from a mere reliance upon magical analogies to the establishment of genuine identities, the conception of cause, and

Dialectic of thought

finally to the doctrine of evolution. The perception that idealism, teleology, and evolution are the same is the goal of our present arrival. Each defines personality, each grasps the permanent and prophetic essence of thought.

Personality

This development of conscious life wherein it passes from utter dependence upon the sensations and feelings of the moment to inclusive personality and temporal independence in the realm of ideas is what Spinoza described as the passage from bondage to freedom whereby the soul wins immortality. It is true that Spinoza's conception was transcendental rather than evolutionary and that it seemingly stopped short of the notion of personality as growing and as surviving by reason of growth. It culminated rather in a rest in the eternal verities, in peaceful accord with an immutable Divine Nature. Evolution substitutes for this an active, assimilative spiritual life. But evolution none the less reiterates Spinoza's argument with a modern pertinence in revealing personality as Nature's unique embodiment of a truly persistent being—one that persists not by grace of time, as the slow-eroding hills, but by conquering and compassing time, past and future being gathered into an endless present. We have not sufficient warrant to say, perhaps, that the soul must exist forever; our knowledge is still confined to a brief arc of experience. But we can assert as evident truth that the course of mental life assumes the form of eternity; in all Nature the mind is the unique embodiment of a real perpetuity as in all Nature personality is the unique exemplar of ideal anticipation and immortal hope.

From bondage to freedom

IV. TRUTH AND NATURE

θειότητος ὄρεξίς ἐστιν ἡ τῆς ἀληθείας.

—Plutarch

I

OF all the myriad idols which men have shaped them of their imaginings none stands forth so austere, so august, and so transcendently elusive as truth. We are wont to think of the human mind as demanding in the objects of its enthusiasms a certain concrete vividness, sense and emotion wrought upon in unison. And indeed, when we contemplate the long pageant of by-gone worships, we do find therein sensuous color and brilliancy; the pantheons of the nations, the symbols of cult and creed, are the ornate illumination of the scroll of mental history. Nevertheless, upon reflection, we perceive clearly that the showy outward appeals are no real clue to the enthusiasms they arouse. For these appeals are utterly impermanent, pantheon giving way to pantheon, symbol to symbol, with kaleidoscopic ease of mutation; but the motive which yields in turn to the sway of each, the zeal and veneration of the religious spirit ever remains, unabated and unabashed through all the change. Surely this motive—able to withstand so oft-repeated overthrow of its dearest idols—must spring from an instinct deep-wrought in the human fibre; it must have its source in some perennial prepotency of man's disposition and its final reason in the laws of life and mind—aye, in the very essence of that

Truth an idol of the imagination

Nature which has brought into being life and mind.

And obviously there is, through all the change, a constant factor. It is a factor without which the development of a superbrute intelligence must have been forever impossible, for it is the key and support of the building human mind. This factor is belief in truth. And I mean not merely belief in the truth of each seeming revelation as it comes,—not merely sincerity of faith, though this is an evident corollary. But what humanizes intelligence is belief in the worth of truth for its own sake; it is belief in true thinking as the only possible mental equipment for successful living; and it is such belief as is ready at any time to reject a revelation that fails in the test of experience and to resume a doubting and troubled search for that fond of verity which, however unattained, will yet never suffer denial.

Truth presupposes faith in truth

The strength of this belief may be estimated from the devotion inspired by its object. Love of truth is the greatest, as it is the least conscious, of man's passions. Not only is it displayed in just and temperate pursuit of knowledge, but often in blind and bloody defense of errors: for error is simulated truth and is cherished only because it presents itself in truth's guise; heretic and heretic-hunter are alike at least in honest zeal, and in our admiration for the noble courage of a Bruno, preferring death to a stain upon reason, we need not utterly condemn in his opponents the grim determination that their truth must prevail. "The soul," says Plato, "has a faculty of loving truth, and of doing all things for the sake of it." In the history of the world it would be difficult to find any ideal that has profoundly

Error is simulated truth

stirred men's minds which has not been regarded as a special and superior manifestation of truth: Crusades, Renaissance, Reformation, Enlightenment, each betokens a new and exalted devotion to belief, and the warring and proselytizing of sects and creeds, in philosophy, science and art as well as religion, are but recurrent testimony to the intensity of earnestness with which men sacrifice and die for their convictions.

Knowledge for its own sake

Perhaps the extreme type of this devotion is to be found in the characteristically modern pursuit of knowledge for its own sake, in that purely intellectual zeal which is the apotheosis of curiosity. "La gloire et la curiosité sont les fleaux de nostre âme," says Montaigne; "cette cy nous conduict à mettre le nez par tout; et celle là nous deffend de rien laisser irresolu et indecis." Curiosity is at root a utilitarian affection of mind; for, while it is easy to be perilously interested, on the whole an inquisitive prying into environment is the condition of healthy caution and wise adaptation. In the primitive stages of human history, where experience is all concrete and the problems are immediate needs, acquisition of knowledge is perforce mainly incidental to impulse and appetite. But a purely speculative interest in the "hang" and "go" of things is not tardy in developing: Bushmen paintings are more than highly naturalistic pleasurings of æsthetic fancy; they are nature studies in a true modern sense, the product of a lively impersonal interest in environment. Now it is just the mastering of the "hang" and "go" of the world that makes human living so exceptionally efficient; men control nature by finding out her hidden catches and springs; to

The "hang" and "go" of the world

discover general rules is to capitalize experience and live on its income, to have reserve funds in time of need. And herein lies the grounding in the laws of life for the development of such a mental trait as curiosity and such a function of mind as precise knowledge.

The rational impulse

But the conception of knowledge as a mere instrument, as a condition of biologic well-being tending to preservation and survival, is a late achievement of reflection. It is only in its maturity that reason begins to understand and take into account its own motives and instincts;—indeed, the very essence of "instinct" is "rational impulse" with the "rational" element suppressed in consciousness for the economizing of energy. The instinct of curiosity is no exception. Hardly yet is it emerged from the impulsive stage; and we may view that type of mind in which it is at once most impulsive and most powerfully developed—the scientific mind, the mind eager for knowledge for the sake of knowledge,—as an extreme specialization of mental power for the good of the race: it is to this mind that we owe the profoundly practical and efficient body of knowledge which is coming more and more to guide sane human endeavor and it is from this mind that we derive that degree of supremacy over physical environment which promises to bring mankind to a hale and hearty age. In its elementary phases curiosity is apt to be intensely practical; its concernments are directly at hand; it answers to near needs. But in order that mind might attain a truly generalized dominion, in order that the instrument might be rendered efficient beyond the purview of the individual, so that the system of science should be-

Curiosity

come a racial possession and benefit, it was necessary that there should arise in the individual an instinctive desire for knowledge beyond the scope of apparent utility; theoretic interest had to develop.

Doubtless if we could foresee the whole evolution of our species we should discover that this theoretic interest does as a matter of fact lead to purely practical results, that there is no such thing as useless science, that with race experience as the test the development of knowledge is conditioned by limited and exacting needs. But it is not nature's way to dissipate energies in her chosen tools: impulse sufficient to the deed is all that she vouchsafes; and so we do as a matter of fact find sprung up in the human mind an acute zeal for knowledge apart from any recognized utility, and correlative with this, in the sense of dignity and possession which knowledge gives, an inner sanction satisfying our emotional natures. The man of science may permit the popular journals to exploit the practical benefits of his work (for from showy benefits comes the popular willingness to support his researches), but inwardly he feels a kind of impatience with such appeal; the utility of his work is felt to be a degradation of the finer sanction, viz., his sense of dignity as an unbiased seeker after truth: in his hierarchy the "pure" sciences are immeasurably exalted above the "applied," and he feels a certain pain when his theoretic investigations result in some practical good. "And the beauty of it, gentlemen, the beauty of it is that it is of no possible use to any one!" was the customary exclamation of a certain mathematician in one of our colleges, when, covered with chalk and beaming with gratification, he emerged

Practical value of theoretic knowledge

from a successful demonstration of his theorem.

Such is perhaps the ideal specialization of the scientific disposition. But it is contrary to nature (and to definition) that any human being should be an unalloyed scientist: there is always some spark —one might almost say, some saving grace—of human interest in his make-up; a degree of pity is compelled even for Mr. Wells's humorously grotesque Cavor in his last horror at finding his mind giving way at the bare spectacle of the insanely sane Selenites,—and the author does in good sooth show us the *reductio ad impossibile* of the scientific mood in his monstrous lunar ants. A development of this kind is revolting to our every sensibility; and just because it is the inevitable logic of our scientific ideal, it enforces upon us a consciousness of the necessary limitations of that ideal, and its need for supplementation.

The scientist satirized

As a rule the supplementation comes in the form of some ulterior interest, standing above the concreteness of scientific problems and dominating the whole mental life and attitude. Except in the most intellectual periods of history this interest has been religious—a reliance upon some superhuman humanity capable of justifying every devotion to truth. Such is, above all, the attitude of scholasticism, though it is also a general heritage of our mental history. Science and philosophy, where not consciously practical, are made ancillary to faith; the justification of the ways of God to man is the justification of reason; and a kind of cosmic morality is made the sufficient ground of being. But in certain periods, the great age of Athenian philosophy, the Renaissance, and especially the

The Scholastic view of science

Nineteenth Century, religion itself has been subjected to the demand for justification; and the conception of Truth has been exalted above that of God or of the Good.

That truth, as a supreme and universal ideal, is capable of inspiring men to a veritable fervor of devotion, is the lesson of many a biography. There is in its appeal something more than mere intellectual curiosity; there is a sacrificial zeal as well, and often a martyr-like resignation of the dearest of human hopes. A certain abnegation and abasement is characteristic of the modern scientific attitude; it owns a kind of shame for human yearnings and the errancy of a desire-driven soul; it humbles itself before the sense of its own attainment, and seems to derive a melancholy reverence from its contemplation of the majestic indifference of nature; with heroic fortitude it strives to quench every rising flicker of merely human animation, and with stoic pride struggles to convert the mind into an impassive recorder of outward being. Its faith is the most unselfish in the world—or, if it have any match, the cry of Job, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust Him," is its sole parallel.

Abnegation and abasement before the majesty of Nature

But the unique and wonderful feature of this devotion is not so much its abnegation of human passion as the tremendous abstractness of its object. What ordinarily moves men's love or reverence is the concrete appeal of material beauty or moral grandeur. Truth, as an ideal, by its nature, of course, possesses neither of these; and although in most systems of thought, beauty and goodness are made truth's predicates, this is but concession to the humanness of the systems' framers; indeed, it

The True the Good and the Beautiful

may almost be said that the difficulties of philosophy are but the inherent contradictoriness of this trinitarian dogma of the unity of the true, the good and the beautiful. By itself truth lacks moral and æsthetic appeal; and, summing in itself all real and possible knowledge, it lacks, too, any concrete interest. It is, to be sure, derived from a vast number of concrete interests, and undoubtedly the fact that it holds these interests in implicit reference is what gives it its stable hold on men. But these implied interests do not in the least explain the emotional hold of the general conception: their nature, taken severally, is as practical or theoretical problems, deriving whatever penumbræ of emotion they may possess from appetitive need or the instinct of curiosity; and there is no incentive to martyrdom in all this. Even if the nature of the universe be the implied content of truth—as for the enlightened mind it is—there is yet no explanation of the emotional hold of the abstract idea. Men undoubtedly are stirred in imagination by their inner spectacle of the evolving world, but this is obviously an æsthetic stimulation; and in any case it cannot account for the sharp summoning of the great idea of which it is but an incidental exposition. For the real cause of devotion to truth and its real rationale in human nature, we must inquire beyond any mere play of feeling and imagery.

II

Devotion to the abstract

The degree of abstractness wherein the conception of truth is still capable of inspiring devotion, and at the same time the clue to the reason for this devotion, are indicated in the celebrated passage of

the *Phædrus,* where, in the one phrase, Plato describes truth as "colorless, formless, intangible," and yet as "the steersman of the soul." Truth is the "steersman of the soul"; truth is a guide, a director, a ruler of life; truth is the giver of human freedom and a creator of human destinies; truth is at once the expression of man's achievement, and the agent of his efficiency.

Truth the "steersman of the soul"

It is the tremendous rôle which the thinking of truths has played in the creation of man's humanity, the liberation of psychical life from its lock-step dependence upon the whip and spur of ever-varying sensation, it is this deed which has inwrought in man's mind his instinctive veneration for the ideal of knowledge. Truth is the steersman of the soul, and in a very near sense; for the body of our knowledge is the chart whereby we direct the course of life, and so determine the soul's development.

The emergence of a human from the multitude of brute species is the most wonderful fact of biological history; and the wonder of it lies almost solely in the appearance of that power of thought, the power of forming generalizations, general conceptions, which is distinctive of man. Man's humanness rests its case on the fact of his human mind. What is above all peculiar to that mind is its foresight; its faculty of abstracting the fixed and constant elements from the general evanescence of experience, and, by service of such abstractions, its power to predict the future. Prediction, foresight, enables preparation, preparation makes possible the realization of ideals.

Mind means foresight

To be sure in the lower animals, nature to a degree makes good the lack of rational foresight.

Instinct and Conception

Instinct is her agency, and in general we may say that, in the long development of mind, consciousness acquires stability and efficiency in two modes or forms, instinct and conception. Both of these come as generalizations of race experience, enforced and ingrained by the harsh contacts of unyielding environments, and both are means of surmounting the transiency of the moment-to-moment life. Instinct is the more primitive and essential. It is also the more narrow, condensed and specialized. Bound close to the preservative and perpetuative activities, and so restricted by the peculiar forms and needs of the organism, it lacks adaptability and elasticity. Nevertheless, it represents a vast advance over the fickleness of consciousness confined to fleeting sensation and whim. An instinct is a kind of universal; it is a sign of a recurrent experience, its relative simplicity representing the multitude of details which the repetitions embrace. It is a race generalization, fixed only after myriad efforts and at a cost of myriad failures, and already it reveals glimmerings of prevision: the honey-maker stakes present toil for future joyance, the sentinel of the herd exchanges present gratification for future safety.

Defects of instinct

Instinct, then, evinces two of the characteristics of conception, universality and prevision. But it lacks the characteristic which must be added to make reason possible, mobility, the power to form varied and new combinations to suit varied and new situations. It lacks, in short, the power to represent the novel and to create the ideal. It is anchored so snugly to the concrete case that abstraction is impossible, and without abstraction there can be no freedom, no ideality.

Thus, the hugeness of the gap separating man as the reasoning animal from the rest of brute creation is warranted by the nature of reason itself; for between instinct and reason is all the difference between blindness and seeing, between servile subjection to ephemeral events and spiritual freedom in the realm of ideas. It is the nature of conception to represent to the mind that which is not present in sense; it is the nature of reason to combine conceptions to likenesses and uses not yet realized in experience. In this nature of reason is founded human freedom,—first realized in that mastery over nature which has enabled man to conquer the antagonisms of physical circumstance and adapt, not himself to environment, but environment to his own need and profit, so that he, alone of animals, is immutably himself in whatever zone or clime.

Reason

But of vastly more consequence than this physical mastery, is the spiritual independence which reason wins for him. The sole instrument and enablement of reason is the conception or idea. Reality is fixed in the matrix of time, forming an unalterably concrete series of haps and events no one of which may beg or borrow added period; gone, each is gone forever. But it is not so with ideas. It is their character and essence to bridge and conquer time. Their truth is the experience of yesterday and the prophecy of tomorrow. They serve, indeed, to create yesterday and tomorrow, for it is by dint of ideas alone that the reach of life is expanded beyond the mere immediacy of appetitive existence. Abstracting from the passing flow of events what is typically and reiterantly significant, they lock these

Spiritual independence

Universal ideas

significances together in the form of universals, which are the counters of intellectual life and the foundation of all intelligent experience. Valid yesterday, today, and tomorrow, universal ideas form the truth,—the talisman opening the portals of all knowledge and giving consistency and worth to all enduring personality. Nor has the human mind been dull to their meaning, but from the very first it has beheld in them its divinities.

III

Evolution of mind

The human mind has evolved. It has not sprung in fullness of strength and glory from the being of creative nature. Only through long generations, the long years of man's history and the vastly longer ages of his prehistory, has it gradually and painfully come to its own. The motive of this evolution is significant of the final meaning of intelligence. As we survey the mind's growth, we see that the process has been one of slow breaking away from the thralldom of sense.

To think—to form abstractions, to classify facts, to organize knowledge—is no light or easy achievement. The animal mind, even at its highest, in the apes, we believe to be absolutely dependent upon the sensations and perceptions of the moment. There may be animals capable of a very dim foresight, but at the best their reach of thought cannot extend beyond a few hours' duration, and the content of their thought can never transcend the particular. It is the perception or feeling of the moment, in all its concrete vividness, that absorbs consciousness; the present hunger or the present

grateful satiety, the present bodily zest or the present drowsiness, these are meter and guide of the conscious life.

Sense of duration

Now the primitive human mind—at its lowest—is advanced far beyond this stage. There are no men incapable of thinking the lapse of days and nights with the concurrent duration of things—no men, perhaps incapable of thinking time in those greater measures set by the phases of the moon or the annual recurrence of the seasons. And these standards, be it noted, are objective; they are no mere appetitive change, but observed alternations in nature. Further, they are observed as recurrences—the terms day, night, moon, winter, mean not merely the experience of light and hunger of this day, the gloom and drowsiness of this night, the waning of this moon, the dolor of this season of snow, but they mean the constantly repeated like experiences in a man's life, days and winters past and to be. In other words, they are terms expressive of generalizations; they are terms by means of which man universalizes his knowledge; they are mental signs of truths of experience.

Principle of identity

The progress of the human mind in its slow emancipation from the domination of sense is conspicuously shown in the emergence, in the history of thought, of the great principles of reason. At the very basis of nature's intelligibility lies the principle known to logic as the principle of identity. On this is based all our classificatory science, all our generalizations, all our abstract thinking, in fact all of that system which we interject into reality by means of language; for every word, every name, denotes some special aspect of nature, which is sub-

ject to repetition. It is because two things or events are alike that we are able to designate them by the one word. Similarities, likenesses, are the keys to our intellectual mastery of what Kant calls the "blind play," the "rhapsody," of undifferentiated sensation.

Now similarity or likeness is purely an ideal relation. It pertains to an apprehending mind, not to the bare fact of reality. Similarity implies an act of comparison, a measurement of one thing against another; an act which can be function of mind only. There are no likenesses in nature; likeness is not a quality of a thing or things, but a relation, established by mind, between things. And recognition of likenesses, identities, is the first great step to the conceptual mastery of nature. It is the beginning of the formation of that map, that mental diagram or scheme of things, which constitutes our notion of the world, and so constitutes our ideal of truth.

Nature knows no likenesses

What it cost the human mind to attain this power of generalization through observation of similarities, is impressively shown by the long and painful mental effort through which freedom in the world of ideas has been won. Through many, many generations, through many, many centuries, man thought, as most men still think, only in concrete images. Myth, fable, allegory, were the normal and necessary vehicles of abstract ideas. A new abstraction formed, wrought as on an anvil in the white heat of experience, glowed with the hue and flare of embodied life, and so was heralded to the mind as a new deity in its great pantheon of ideas. The count of every primitive religion reveals its quota of hypostatized ideas: the Hindu *Dharma,*

the divine Law, comparable to the *Logos* of Greek and Christian thought; the Greek *Charis, Themis, Nemesis;* the Roman *Justitia, Fides, Bellona;* the Norse *Frith* and *Blith.* Most of these originated as attributes of some more primitive deity—a nature deity, as these are deities of society—the attribute being first personified as a special incarnation of this deity, and then, thanks to the mental clutch which personification gives, thrown off as independent members of the divine council. Thus *Zeus* is father of *Dike,* Justice; *Athena Nikephoros,* the bearer of victory, is transformed into *Nike,* the Winged Victory herself.

Hypostasis in myth

But the nature gods themselves illustrate the same development. They merely belong to an earlier stratum of abstractive thought. Zeus is the shining heavens, summarizing the light and orderliness of the world above; Demeter is the earth beneath, and Kore, her daughter, is the symbol of the vegetation of recurring years. These gods are abstractions of man's experience of elemental nature, forged as it were by Nature herself in his growing mind, to enable him to overleap the narrow boundaries of the moment and master days and seasons to come.

The gods

It is many generations beyond the mythic stage of thought—a stage we have not yet wholly outgrown—that the thinkers of our race begin to realize the true meaning of abstract thinking: how it is the functional rather than the material element that is significant for human life; that truth is measured by what mastery of natural destiny truth yields.

Pragmatic test

The primitive organization of nature under mythic forms gives place to the conception of a universe

Law and order

governed by law and order. But what is this law and order? In reality, it is only a new mythology, a new truth. It serves our purpose better than the old; its basis is a greater range and duration of human experience. But its basis is nevertheless nought but human experience, and human experience taken in its unreal, in its ideal, intention. Scientific law is scientific truth. This is not to say that it is fact. It is a certain statement of fact,—fact generalized. It has correspondence with fact. But the correspondence is relative to signification, to the respect in which the facts are considered, hence to human intelligence and purpose.

Let us briefly consider this relationship of truth and fact.

Truth and fact

We cannot ask of a fact if it be true, when we mean by "fact" the actual flow of phenomena in world history; a fact cannot be other than status or locus in the general course of events; fact is reality itself; and it would be meaningless to speak of reality as true or false. But ideas symbolize facts, and according as that symbolism is efficient or inefficient, we term them true or false. To be sure, ideas may exist as psychical events without being either true or false; they may be neutral so long as they are not predicated of anything; but this is considering them apart from a thinking process, and it is doubtful if any idea is ever entertained apart from some possible judgment. And the faintest suggestion of use in judgment is a degree of truth-or-error already entered into the idea. An idea which is a possibility is tinged with truth; it points to some reality of which it is the truth and it begins to shape itself to the system or

context in which that reality is conceived as existent.

Manifestly, the only employment of ideas is as truth or falsehood; they are suggested predicates or they are mental lumber. But this is not saying that there is but one species of truth or falsehood open to them. As a matter of fact, there are myriad such; as many as we have worlds abuilding,—and the ordinary mind has a considerable number of these worlds, each formed of a group of concepts united by some center of interest, to some particular purpose,—and each, at least ostensibly, unrelated to its mates. Thus, we have the world of reality in numerous fairly disjunct aspects: as a world of every-day contacts, the limited one-man reality; as a world of social ideals, the communal world; as a world of beauty and ugliness; as a world of philosophical or scientific speculation, a cosmos; and we have besides as many fictive or romantic worlds as there are fictions or romances. The same ideas are judged true or false in these various worlds only in analogous senses; and as each world has its own governing conception, ideas enter in or are rejected in utterly different proportion. In each case the candidate for truth-positing is tested for its ability to fit into and bind together the general system of which it is to form a part, and while it necessarily modifies the conceptual whole to some extent, it is itself reacted upon by the sheers and strains of the total structure.

The variety of our worlds

The scientific world of law and order no less than the mythic world of the wills of the gods is thus a creation of a point of view; it is a regard in which things are considered. As a system it stands out against nature, as a sort of key to nature; and it

The world of science

is by no means, as we are too wont to think, embodied in the being of reality. There is a great fission between thought and things, the one having its order in a hierarchy of ideal relationships, the other in the historic flow of events known to us only in sense-perception.

IV

Perhaps I can bring home this ideal and relative character of scientific truth by illustration.

The concept of ether

An interesting instance of that broadening of human powers of conception which I have been stating, centers about the notion of ether. The idea of ether doubtless originates with the mythic conception of the blue sky as the abode or embodiment of divinity,—Zeus is the Æther, with Æschylus. And thence it passed into science through Aristotle's notion of it as the substance of the higher empyrean, the realm of stars.

But its significance for modern physics dates mainly from the objection of Leibnitz to Newton's theory of gravitation, that action at a distance is impossible and inconceivable. To meet the objection, ether, or an etheric fluid, was postulated as a medium for action by contact, that is, as a medium for the conveyance of gravitational forces. Today the reverse of Leibnitz's view is the more tenable. Lotze has shown that action by contact is, if anything, less conceivable than action at a distance, and indeed action at a distance is essential to the conception of force itself, and of gravitation. For gravitation is nothing more than the expression of a relation between two bodies separated in space. Simply stated, it is the rule that the acceleration of

Actio in distans

each of the bodies is proportional to the mass of the other, while the attractive force or tendency is inversely as the square of the distance. The word "force," as applied to gravitation, means only a tendency to motion of a certain sort under certain conditions; and it is affirmed that this is universal. But under certain ideal conditions it could not be universal. For the force of gravitation is purely an attractive force, that is, it is a tendency of motion of bodies toward one another. Now if it be conceived that this force is the only one in existence and further that it is operative only in the particles (mere centers of this force) composing the earth, then there would be one irresistible and ever accelerating tendency of all these particles toward the earth's center of gravity, involving the ultimate shrinking of the globe to a mere punctual nothingness. The same mishap would occur, under like supposition, to a finite universe.

Gravitation as a force

Of course such a *reductio ad absurdum* of gravitation is too far from the facts of reality to be more than idle speculation; there are repulsions as well as attractions to be taken into account; but at least it serves to emphasize the fact that human theories are built upon too narrow a range of phenomena, hold true of too limited a sphere of reality, to serve as a foundation for the prediction of cosmic destinies. Even in our own solar system it is not certain that gravitational attraction does not exceed the ratio expressed by the law, though by an infinitesimal fraction, as the sun is neared.[1]

Relativity

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[1] The recent physical theory of Relativity is but a new illustration of the fact that scientific laws are hypotheses of description within limited and chosen cantons of experience.

In emphasizing the limitation of scientific theory, scientific achievement is in no wise being brought into question. What is essential to be understood is that scientific thought is today in rapid evolution and that scientific knowledge is at best only an account of restricted fields of reality. A generation ago Mill held that the whole inquiry of natural science is for causes of phenomena; today physicists assert that the notion of cause has no place in their science at least. Time, space, mass are the categories under which physical phenomena may be conceived. Is it for a moment to be supposed that these can give an adequate account of this rich and varied world in which we dwell? The whole region of growth, vitality, consciousness, the visible, tangible, audible dimensions of creation, are yet to be taken into account.

Physics not a science of causes

For a quarter of a century philosophers have been examining and analyzing scientific conceptions with an assiduousness and interest proportional to the immense significance of their metaphysical bearings. The result of this investigation has been singularly unanimous. The body of scientific law is conceded to be a powerful instrument of knowledge, a veritable calculus of reality, but in no sense a photographic reproduction of reality; it is a mnemonic device for the assemblage of facts useful or calculable; it is not a narrative of creation. In consequence of this view, materialism,—the conception of the universe as an atomistic machine,—has been utterly discarded. It answers not the least demands of reason, accounts not for the most patent facts. In its place, idealism, in some form or other, holds general sway; and it is safe to assert that the doc-

Nor its laws a narrative of creation

trine of evolution with its attendant theories, has served no end more certainly than that of compelling the philosophic conclusion that purposive intelligence is the chief fact, the *Leitmotiv* of the universe.

The Whence and the Whither

Of course the philosopher, too, frames his opinion upon the meager basis of human experience. There is a temerity periling effrontery in any effort to infer the whence and whither of the cosmos from a span of experience at its utmost covering less than ten thousand recorded years, and in its free intelligence only a fraction of that time. But the philosopher at least has in his favor that he judges in accordance with instincts to which nature has indubitably given rise; he recognizes and considers those human values which for us are alone significant.

V

Protagoras began his treatise on truth, "Man is the measure of all things." The history of the growth of knowledge since his day but emphasizes the certainty of this aphorism. With Plato and Aristotle it received a Socratic tinge,—"the *good man* is the measure of all," as Aristotle phrases it; and this was proper, for it was no more than the necessary recognition of that moral element in the world which makes human living possible. Yet it has proven unfortunate for subsequent thought that the good man, with both Plato and Aristotle, proved to be a character purely intellectual; apparently these philosophers find the height of goodness in a speculative mood,—and hence has sprung that fearful dichotomy of intellect and intellectible which has

Intellect and intellectible

ever since been the amazement and despair of thinking men: on the one hand, transcendent Nature; on the other, hugely transcended, finite Man.

Dark from excess of light

"The philosopher," remarks the Stranger, in the *Theætetus,* "always holding converse through reason with the idea of being, is dark from excess of light." The philosopher, in other words, dealing only with statistics (for our general ideas are naught if not statistical), misses the reality. Plato is perhaps realizing his own danger; for it is the dialectical philosopher who most errs through excess of reason's light—the philosopher who, while he fearingly mistrusts his perceptions and feelings, yet regards his reason as securely free from the idiosyncracies of his personal experience. In a passage where he is refuting the saying of Protagoras—or his own misconception of it,—Plato makes Socrates to say:

Theætetus 179c

> There are many ways, Theodorus, in which the doctrine that every opinion of man is true may be refuted; but there is more difficulty in proving that states of feeling, which are present to a man, and out of which arise sensations and opinions in accordance with them, are also untrue.

Experience means *nature*

And this is the very crux: there are many ways of manipulating ideas, but experience manipulates itself, and impresses its own beliefs upon the soul. Experience, if it mean anything, means *nature;* and these Nature-impressed beliefs are bound to be our only cue to truth—which will be solid in proportion as it assimilates and accounts for them. "Truths confirmable by sense and secular observation," remarks Sir Thomas Browne, "seems to me the surest path to trace the labyrinth of Truth."

There are two general modes in which men take thought about Nature. There is, first, the *analytic*

mode. Prompted by curiosity—be it casual or temperamental—your man of mind comes to a halt in the course of living long enough to dissect and examine the experience of living; and so becomes a thinker. If zest of thought lead him no farther than this, if he remain content to examine, dissect, analyze, then his thinking is all in the temper we have come to call scientific. But if his interest be more than merely curious, if he be moved by personal and self-conscious motives, above all by concern for his mind's relation to the course of his living, then his thought passes from the analytic into the *explanatory mode;* from science he proceeds to philosophy.

Analysis and explanation

Analysis of Nature has as its object one simple end, her intelligibility. Its motive is a purely intellectual passion—curiosity; its end is a purely intellectual satisfaction—truth. Explanation, on the other hand, is complex. Its motives are as many as there are phases to human personality; its ends are as various as are human desires. It must satisfy not only the appetite of the intelligence, but as well the thousand and one named and nameless appetites which along with this make up the whole of living.

And these appetites (desires, conations, volitions, aspirations, idealizations)—these appetites are the agencies which define our "interests" in the world, and hence, in the run of life, *determine our selections of truth.* Man cannot be merely nor can he be ubiquitously curious; no man can be merely any more than he can be ubiquitously a scientist; action and passion, along with thought, are parcel of life. Truths are too many for one attention or one experience; and every life and every life's ideals are patterned upon what truths its interests find signifi-

Our interests determine our truths

cant; so that what we call *Truth,* in general, is the world's response to our selective interests; it is a creed of living, expressing the degree of Nature's complaisance to our wish.

Intelligence and Imagination

This, as I understand it, is the pragmatic notion of truth. With it, I have no quarrel,—only I think that it needs supplementation. Our measure of the world is human science; and the measure of science is human intelligence; but intelligence itself is meted out by Nature and only humanized by the power of imagination. It is a gift of Nature, through imagination; and so may be regarded as a reflection in the creature of his creator—*in so far as* that creator is human. *How far* that may be we have no means of telling, to my way of thinking; it is only your Absolute idealist who can project the figure of human nature into the whole of Nature.

When I say that intelligence is dependent upon imagination, I understand imagination to represent in us the inward and, for man, the essential embodiment of Nature's creative power. Imagination is not alone the solace of life; it is also, and above all else, the faculty which has lifted man above the time-serving brute, making possible his insight into the natural history of what lies behind the screen of sensation. Imagination is the power whereby we discover truth; it is the instrument by means of which we rear the wonderful structure of human knowledge, our parable of reality. Its potency measures possible science; its flexibility determines mental evolution. According to Herbert Spencer, conceivability, or as he puts it, the inconceivableness of the negative, is our final criterion of truth. Upon the mind's power to abstract and relate phenomena

Spencer's criterion

science is dependent, and with this power science is limited. John Stuart Mill, in comment, pointed out that human power of conception is not a static thing, that it expands from generation to generation,—the antipodes, inconceivable in the fifteenth century, are accepted as commonplace in the sixteenth,—and by reason of this expansion, continually broadens the mind's horizon, continually throws back the borderline of possibility. On the one hand is human impotence, the mind's abashment in the presence of the unknown; on the other there is an energy of growth ever straining the leash of mortal circumstance.

Mill's criticism

It is the failure to recognize this generative force in reason which lies at the source of most objections to the *homo mensura* doctrine. Truth is conceived as changeless and fixed; not as fluid and growing. Montaigne has an essay on the thesis, *c'est folie de rapporter le vray et le faulx au jugement de nostre suffisance,* in which he says: "Reason teaches me that resolvedly to pronounce a thing false and impossible is to assume the chance of having in one's head the bornes and limits of the will of God and of the power of our Mother Nature; and there is no more notable folly in the world than to reduce these to the measure of our capacity and our sufficiency." And again: "It is a temerarious presumption, this of knowing how far extends possibility!" These sayings are perfectly valid; and it is only because Montaigne has the perverted notion that truth is static and superhuman throughout that he uses them to belittle human insight. The folly is not the measuring of truth and error on the scale of human experience; but of reducing them to a scale of pure reason.

Montaigne

Garcilasso de la Vega

There is an odd and interesting passage in Garcilasso de la Vega *(Royal Commentaries)* illustrating the same mixture of shrewd insight and rationalistic frailty. Garcilasso is arguing for the habitability of the torrid and frigid zones. As for the habitableness of the tropics, he was born there, and could testify from experience. But for the frigid zones: "God has not made such great regions of the earth that they should remain useless, since it is well known that he has created this vast globe as the dwelling-place of man. . . This is confirmed by the word of God himself, who, having created our first parents, commanded them: 'Increase and multiply; fill the earth, and render it subject to you.'" In good time, Garcilasso hopes, God will reveal the secrets of these seemingly waste regions, as, in good time, he has revealed the New World. "And this," he says, "without doubt will turn to confusion and shame those overbold ones who by their natural philosophy foolishly imagine that the divine power cannot pass beyond the bounds of the human spirit, failing to consider that from the one science to the other there is no less a distance than from the finite to the infinite."

Fact and analogy

Garcilasso's evidence is of two sorts: statement of fact and reasoning from analogy. It is obvious that he relies for persuasion upon the analogies rather than the facts; they loom more important in his mind. His willingness to abnegate present understanding, to trust in God's good time, is but the measure of his faith in the analogical argument. The distance from natural science to teleology, from fact to divine plan, is not, however, as he conceives it, from the finite to the infinite; rather it is from the

infinite to the finite; for the teleology is but his man-measure of God. Teleology is his account of Nature, in so far as Nature is anthropomorphised, and hence made worthy of trust and of veneration. And this is at once the ground for the stress laid on analogical reasonings and the occasion of his faith in their finality.

Parmenides and Copernicus

Precisely similar is Parmenides' argument for the spherical shape of the World: the sphere is the most perfect of figures, and the Whole can be nothing short of the most perfect. Copernicus reasons: "In the midst of all stands the sun; for who could in this most beautiful temple place this lamp in another or better place than that from which it can at the same time illuminate the whole?" In each case the *truth* is in the analogical justification. The *fact* is only incidental to the mind's history.

Poetics 1459a

It is worth remarking that this reasoning is not only valid, but that it is the only possible valid reasoning. "The greatest thing by far is to have a command of metaphor; this alone cannot be imparted by another; it is the mark of genius." Aristotle is defining the poetic endowment; but his words are equally true in the realm of reason. For all reasoning is essentially poetic and all our words are metaphors. It is only in the infinite and chaotic realm of fact that we at once escape poetry and reason, humanity and truth.

Dante

I think that most of our difficulties with reasonings grow out of their more or less indissoluble union with the anti-reason of the world of fact; reason follows the senses and reason has short wings, says Dante. Reason represents cosmos, fact chaos; and the two are indefinitely interbound. Of course

this is but another way of saying that we are human beings in the midst of a universe that is only fragmentarily humanized. But for some restless cause this is a condition we cannot contemplate with contempt. Further, it involves us in the most deceptive snares; for we are ever seeing the half-incarnations, the half-humanizations of fact,—jackal-headed, bull-bodied, winged and taloned human monstrosities,—which we know must be false yet feel to be real.

This is because we have not yet learned to treat our ideas for what alone they are—functions, or powers, of reality. Truth is an instrument, not a picture,—and where the picture element intrudes (as intrude it must), what we get is a defect of the truth. "The definition of being is simply power," and power is the quintessence of truth. It need hardly be added that this power is psychical; and therefore human; and therefore a waxing or a waning power. Its individuality in Nature is that of the human nature of which it is, as it were, the barometric expression.

Truth is an instrument

"Man is the measure of all things." But man's is a changing, a growing nature. Ever he seeks to project this nature out into the cosmos which environs him, and ever he finds the cosmos growing with his own inner growth. The system of the sciences is continually enlarging and must continue to enlarge so long as there is growth of intelligence. The system of the sciences is our truth. And this is, of course, to say that truth is ever changing, ever growing. Truth is relative to human insight. It is nothing fixed in the being of the world of fact; it is only that ideal of this world which mind has found useful to mind's purpose.

Its measures change

VI

And from this point of view we are warranted in criticising the conception of Nature which commonly goes under the name of materialism or of mechanism,—the view, often called the scientific view of things, which asserts that our earth and our solar system are but a phase in the evolution of some primordial cloud of star dust, due in the tale of the ages to become star dust once again. From nebulæ worlds are generated to be resolved once more to nebulæ after running their course. Man's life is but an incident of this cosmic process, it is meaninglessly generated to be as meaninglessly snuffed out; and the sole rôle of human intelligence is to evolve a knowledge of the uselessness and hopelessness of human life, while the acme of human dignity lies in the attainment of a sort of melancholy satisfaction in reviewing the grim spectacle of the cosmic æons. *Atque iterum ad Troiam magnus mittetur Achilles; renascentur religiones, et ceremoniae, res humanae in idem recident, nihil nunc est quod non olim fuit, et post saeculorum revolutiones alias, erit.*[2] The world is self-repeating, and self-repeating in its

Nebular worlds

Annus Magnus

[2]"For as though there were a Metempsychosis, and the soul of one man passed into another, Opinions do find, after certain Revolutions, men and minds like those that first begat them" . . . . The pertinence of this aphorism of the *Religio Medici* is most excellently shown by the history of the very figure in which it is expressed. "Plato's year" ("a revolution of certain thousand years, when all things should return unto their former estate, and he be teaching again in his school, as when he delivered this opinion"—as Sir Thomas explains it) is a conception already venerable in Plato's day,—fathered alike by Chaldee, Etruscan, Hindu and Maya. Yet it is refurbished to us of today as a *new* and *scientific* conception. "The atoms in the tear wherewith your winking eyelid has just now moistened your eyelid, where were they when the solar nebula reached out as far as Neptune? . . . . They may have moistened the eyes of a greater than Shakespeare in the course of the history of the last nebula but one, or, gathered into overflowing tears, they may express the agony of sorrow or ecstasy of joy in some heart like yours that may beat in the course of Cosmic evolution some ten or a billion nebulæ hence" (C. W. Saleeby). We now look upon the *annus magnus* as a *tour de force* of mythologizers; but it is every whit as scientific as the modern cycle of reduplicating nebulæ. Both conceptions are merely the expression of the limitation of human imagination: the only science involved is psychology.

every detail,—for the reason that man can imagine nothing new. This is but another species of anthropomorphism,—man worshiping the shadow of his blinder self; for the conception thus raised up as the august antipode of human frailty is still a creation of the human mind, a part of the proper furniture of that conscious being which is summoned to abashment.

Cosmic cycles

The conception of the life of the universe as consisting of cycles of blind evolutions followed by blind destructions is not a new conception. It is older than the despair of Buddha, and if in no just sense ascribable to Heraclitus, it is not to be distinguished from the conception which lay at the basis of the ascetic abnegation of the Stoics or that which issued in Proclus's ghastly theory of world degeneration. It *may* be that the conception is true. But the "may be," let it be understood, is merely an acknowledgment of human fallibility. It means only that our finite knowledge is incapable of conclusively gainsaying any possibility; it does not mean that the theory itself is, humanly speaking, probable or plausible.

For we must remember our premises. Truth is not the gist of reality, but our scheme of it, measured by our intelligence; and our nature and intelligence are ever-growing. If we know anything in this world it is the fact of growth—the fact of ever-receding limits to knowledge—the fact of never-ending imaginative conquests. Growth of mind is growth of imagination; growth of imagination is continuation of our mental conquest and absorption of nature. There is no ultimate or absolute truth so long as life is, nor is any final pronouncement of

Truth is an image

man's destiny possible so long as man is engaged in making his place in the world.

It is not unnatural, then, if we feel a certain grotesqueness in the contention of those whose business it is to be seers of truth, that, with the bourne of their imaginations reached, the fullness of human knowledge is in sight. To be sure, we concede a limit at which each individual imagination must balk further progress; but that limit attained, it is not the part of an oft-vaunted scientific humility to challenge future insight. It is as were the imagination to come saying: "I am old. I am weak and worn. I can see no more. But I have conceived and brought forth my thought, the satiate truth. Beyond there is nothing."

Imaginative satiety

> Iam nemo, fessus satiate videndi,
> suspicere in cæli dignatur lucida templa!

Lucretius II. 1038

It is little wonder that such a view should have led, through the contrariety of despair, to Nietzsche's barbaric laudation of man as the "great blond beast" overriding natural destinies. But it is wonder that it could ever so appeal to human rationality as to blind men to the evidences of intelligence in the world. Our own reason is an instance of this intelligence, and we are at least parcel of Nature. Nor is there any contradiction of science in making,—nor any warrant of science which opposes,—the assertion of higher intelligence than ours in the universe, battling, with us, against night and chaos.

Furthermore, even in the mechanistic view of Nature, there is an invariable, if often unwitting, insistence upon the human factor—the man-value of truth. In itself mechanism is the most monstrous of

idolatries. It outrages every sentiment of the soul, every principle of the reason (though this is not saying that it may yet not be fact; if the world be chaos, reason is chaotic with the rest). In order to redeem it, the mechanist seeks to furbish it up with some aspect of human significance. The best of his conception is a sort of Overman,—one who has extinguished all the warmth of human feeling and desire, and in place of a destiny answering man's natural needs has set the chill ideal of impassive Intellect. But this, too, is human. *Man* after all is the measure; he alone is the unit of worth—he, the weak sport and victim of the colossal nightmare! If there are meanings, they are meanings for the human soul; if there are truths, they are truths of human destiny; if any value is, it is the creation of human experience. The intellectual value that is recognized is a product of dissection and mutilation —self-dissection, self-mutilation—but it is none the less part and parcel of man's being. The naïve openness of the confession shows the faith of the mechanist the more appalling. One sees him precarious on the verge of realization; one trembles for the revelation that may shatter his trust. Helpless in the coils of his belief, already he begins to feel dimly the horror of it, the horror he has never dared to front, face to face. With the desperate old instincts of his soul he clutches still the humanhood for which his creed has no place, attesting still the supreme worth of that spirit his philosophy must deny. Man, though mere mortality, about to die, he salutes.

The Faith of the Mechanist

VII

Perhaps the wisest of the ancient sayings concerning truth is Plutarch's, "Truth is a striving after divinity." In what has preceded I have endeavored to show that truth belongs to the world of ideas and ideal relations—of human ideas, human thought.

Divine Ideas

But there is another world of Ideas—Plato's world of divine Ideas, the model and archetype of the visible universe. Human ideas, according to Plato, and human works, and indeed all the works of visible nature, are but imitations of these divine archetypes. They are but expressions of that dumb striving of all imperfect being after perfect being which Plato found to be motive alike of the history of mankind and the history of changing nature.

Nowadays we give Plato's thought a new interpretation. In the light of the doctrine of evolution we are once again brought face to face with a scheme of nature the motive of which is the striving of an imperfect after a perfect being. Through the long ages of geologic time we see species and genera and orders of life, at first embryonic in form, affording only a faint premonition of their eventual type, proceeding by devious and laborious paths to this type's realization. A striking example of this is shown in the development of that one of the orders of the mollusc class—the Cephalopoda,—now only represented by the "many-chambered nautilus." Beginning far back in Palæozoic times with genera of the type of the Orthoceras, preserved to us in the form of simple conical shells compartmentally divided, this branch developed through the ages; first, slightly curved forms; and then the more and more

The "chambered nautilus"

tightly coiled varieties with ever-increasing complexity of structure, which culminates in the Ammonites—coil contiguous upon coil. It was as if, through all those millions of years, nature had held before herself this ideal of beauty, to be consummated only through infinite experiment, infinite endeavor, infinite striving. Thus the wonder of the Ammonite is a part of the meaning of the Orthoceras, though the realization of this meaning was to be bought at a price of æons. So it is with every natural type. It is contained implicitly in its dim precursors, but only the long years can bring nature's thought to the surface.

Evolutional teleology

Does not this mean intelligence, reason, plan in the universe? A truth like our truth in being ideal, in existing for the future toward which like ours, it is ever reaching out? It means this, or our own truth is illusion.

And the human mind,—the human mind is itself a product of this striving growth. It is itself a part of the divine plan contained in that world of ideas, which forecasts evolutions. We as human animals are creatures of this creative Nature.

Only—and here is the great fact—the end of our development is not its material form. Nature has not exhausted her gift to man in the creation of his body,—his physical vital history. She has given him mind. And it is the great function of mind to win for us freedom from the flux and flow of merely physical destinies. In attaining the ideal the mind becomes emancipated from the perishable world of things; it wins its freedom, as Spinoza puts it, in the world of ideas. Truth, then—our human truth, relative, mutable, ever imperfect, ever-growing,—

Our *human* form is not our *material* form

is the means and symbol of the deliverance of the soul from merely mortal destinies. It is not for what truth pictures to us—the world idea it generates from generation to generation—that it has meaning, but for what truth does for us, that freeing of the spirit which can come only with ideals that lift us above the chance and circumstance of material time. "Truth is a striving after divinity" —that divinity which from the first man has found only in the world of his ideals.

Dante perceives that truth is desire of God—*Paradiso*, IV

Io veggio ben che giammai non si sazia
Nostro intelletto, se il ver non lo illustra,
Di fuor dal qual nessun vero si spazia.
Posasi in esso, come fiera in lustra,
Tosto che giunto l'ha: e giugner puollo;
Se non, ciascun disio sarebbe frustra.
Nasce per quello, a guisa di rampollo,
Appiè del vero il dubbio: ed è natura,
Ch' al sommo pinge noi di collo in collo.

Here, more simply than in all the writings of the philosophers, is summarized the part and character of our ideal of Truth,—showing it final in unattainment, inspiring in its very imperfection, stable only in its evanescence, yet building as upon a rock the firm structure of human Faith.

V. THE GOODNESS AND BEAUTY OF TRUTH

Darknesse and light hold interchangeable dominions, and alternately rule the seminal state of things.

—*Sir Thomas Browne.*

I

Optimism of Philosophy

IT is of curious interest that, regarded in its whole course, philosophy has been optimistic. It has pronounced truth good. There have been, there still are, pessimists: Proclus and Schopenhauer and all Asia. But the world is yet a livable world, and the philosophic phrasing of this livableness is that its truth is a good truth. The race has lived and thriven, it has achieved a certain mastery over nature, harnessing her powers to the fulfillment of men's needs; nay, in the very opulence of its rulership contriving new needs for her ministration. That philosophy were less than human which should fail to nod its Jovian approval of such efficient living!

And yet it is of curious interest,—not that philosophy should have made appetite the measure of truth, for without this she could not have been philosophy; nor yet that she should have pronounced the world livable and life good, for otherwise she would have countered biological fact,—but it is of curious interest that the credo in a life *dominantly* good should have expanded into a credo in a life *absolutely* good, that the recognition that the controlling truths of nature are, humanly speaking, beneficent should have crystallized in the dogma of the identity of the true and the good.

Of course the main stress, the "drive," of experience is all in this direction: the truths that interest and hold us are the ductile, the malleable truths of our world; life is action, and the thought-reaction of efficient living naturally brings into emphasis complaisant truths. Nevertheless, it would seem that the consciousness, inevitable to every human being, of the stubbornness and inductility of the moiety of experience ought to preclude any generalization of *all* particular truths into one truth, homogeneously beneficent. There are unconquerable and even "brutal" facts in every life, for whose truth it is normal to expect recognition; and yet, I sometimes think, the chief "job" of philosophy has been to "get around" these facts.

Truth's apologists

Now I do not believe that this task could ever have been performed, even plausibly, but for a subtle duplicity in the measures we have set for truth. This duplicity derives, I imagine, from Plato. In the *Philebos,* Plato makes truth and goodness alike into ends of action, for he speaks of "the power or faculty . . . which the soul has of loving truth, and of *doing all things for the sake of it,*" and he also says, "that for the sake of which something else is done must be placed in the class of the good, and that which is done for something else, in some other class." That which is *sought for its own sake* is good, and the soul loves truth for truth's sake. The good, then, is, at least in part, the true, but that truth does not exhaust the meaning of goodness is the whole intent of this dialogue. The conclusion is thus presented:

Plato's *Philebos*

"And now the power of the Good has retired into the region

of the Beautiful; for Measure and Symmetry are Beauty and Virtue the world over.

"True.

"Also we said that Truth was to form an element in the mixture.

"Certainly.

Beauty, Symmetry, Truth form the Good,

"Then, if we are not able to hunt the Good with one idea only, with three we may catch our prey; Beauty, Symmetry, Truth are the three, and these taken together we may regard as the single cause of the mixture, and the mixture as being good by reason of the infusion of them."

The power of the good has retired into the region of the beautiful, and *truth forms an element in the mixture.* Plato does not assert the identity of the true, the good, and the beautiful; though he does say that the good must be true as well as beautiful. Yet in analyzing goodness into beauty and virtue and truth, and in finding measure and symmetry—or, as we should say, law and order—to be the essence of beauty and virtue, he makes more than easy the step which philosophy was not loath to take, summarized in the great trinitarian doctrine of the essential unity of truth, goodness, and beauty.

This step, as I say, is only implicit in Plato's utterances, though as I conceive his philosophy, he might have proceeded to the explicit dogma with right of far more logical grace than is manifest in most of his successors who have so proceeded. For

but the Imperfect is evil

the very heart of Plato's thinking is the identification of truth and ideality. He does not, as do later thinkers, attempt to justify the imperfect world of terrene experience; rather, he condemns it,—with a sensitive and poetic sympathy for the life that all men share, yet none the less with the conscientious austerity of his idealism, he condemns it, severing it hopelessly from the empyreal domain of truth. Plato

does not deny the existence of ugliness and pain and evil and falsity; he does not justify these experiences; but he asserts that there is a world, an ideal world, which is forever free of them, and in so asserting he is immortally true to the idealizing instincts of his kind.

II

Plato's dualism

But how has fared the dogma in the thought of Plato's philosophic posterity? The duality of Plato's cosmos—spite of the fact that to it all human living gloryingly testifies—has seemed to his successors, from Aristotle onward, a defect to be overcome. Even Christian philosophy, which ought to have welcomed Platonic dualism as its potent ally, has persistently yielded to the mania for monism.

Augustine and the Scholastics

Already with Augustine God is "absolute, immutable, omnipresent Goodness and Truth and Beauty"; and already we are committed to the Scholastic formularies: *ens est unum,* Being is One; and this One, in relation of conformity with knowing, is *ens verum,* in relation to appetite *ens bonum,* in relation to contemplation of restful proportion *ens pulchrum.*

Shaftesbury

The breaking away from Scholasticism brought no emancipation from this trinitarianism. Shaftesbury reasons: "What is beautiful is harmonious and proportionable; what is harmonious and proportionable is true; and what is at once both beautiful and true is, of consequence, agreeable and good." This (obviously reminiscent of the *Philebos*) is made ground for identifying goodness and truth and beauty in their mutual predicability with respect to a single creation. Of course the Leibnitzian contention that this is the best possible, or most perfect, of

Leibnitz

worlds is but another iteration of the same hypothesis. Perfection, with Leibnitz, is either moral or physical-metaphysical, and in each sense it may be predicated, in the greatest possible degree, of the one world which actually is.

The Absolute

Finally we come to the modern philosophy of the Absolute, the last desperate expedient to save the face of the world! The Absolute is, in the first place, absolute reality. But the real is ideal, and in ideality is the essence of all truth. Hence the Absolute is the absolute truth. Further, being Absolute, it is perfect; perfection is absoluteness. And the meaning of perfection can only be finality in goodness and beauty. So in the Absolute, which is the essence of the world, is the summate realization of truth and goodness and beauty.

Experience Manichæan

Such, briefly, is the development of this curious philosophical assumption that the whole truth of life must somehow be justified to the living as at once beautiful and good. That the assumption proceeds from emotion rather than logic and that the conclusions which it prompts are clamorously belied by experience, I do most potently believe. The world in which most lives pass is hopelessly Manichæan, compact of struggling good and ill. The evil that men do is black and stinking, and it lives after them. And if the good, oft interred, as oft rises, it is only to renew its war with ills no more phantom than itself. Bitter-sweet is experience, and the bitter is as mordant as the sweet is suave.

But if experience be thus doubly edged with the twin blade of pain and bliss, if the hurt of life and the sin of it be stinging sharp in its substance, what sense shall be made of this denial of truth to the

darker half of being? How can philosophy over-persuade experience, so that consciousness of evil shall be brought to belie itself?

This is the moral problem of the universe which, through obdurate centuries, the willful optimism of the human mind has tackled and tackled again, tirelessly, tenaciously.

Obviously the problem is hopeless from the human point of regard (save, indeed, at the cost of human reason, as witness Christian Science!). Obviously a shift of vantage must precede even attempted solution. And this shift was early made. In order to sustain the goodness of all truth, truth and goodness alike were made predicable (in their *totality,* taken to be the same as their *reality*) not of human experience as human beings know and name it, but of the absolute experience of the creative mind. The Scriptures offered a happy starting-point for this shift:

The great apology

> And God saw everything that he had made, and, behold, it was very good. And the evening and the morning were the sixth day.

Creation was completed, *and it was good.* Henceforth theology owned but one task: "to justify the ways of God to men."

The shift was from the point of view of man's insight to the point of view of God's insight, from the reasoning of creature to the reasoning of creator, from humanism to cosmism. Truly the device is poignantly simple! Human wretchedness and misery and grief, human cruelty and sin and shame, human agonies under the butchership of nature—all the seeming diabolism of the world—were to be dissipated by a change of perspective; under the en-

God's perspective

chantments of cosmic distances all the harsh and rasping lines of the pattern of life were to melt into easeful and gracious curves and the piercing notes of mortal suffering to modulate into celestial harmonies.

If there were not something so desperately pathetic in it all—this wild effort of the afflicted atomy to "save the phenomenon" of creation—if reason were not so blindingly in tears, nausea could be our sole reaction to such thought. But the pathos and the tears are there, through all the obdurate centuries.

Persuasion

But let us come to the force of the persuasion. Reasonings set forth in their nakedness are impotent to hold the minds of men; they must be clothed in the bright and varied raiment of passion and imagination—this, or go beggarly to starveling ends. And so in this case: God is all-wise and creation, as he sees it, all-good; the imperfection of a relative and mortal being is cured in the perfection of absolute being. In doctrines such as these there is no solace for the hurt life save by some merciful descent of their incarnate grace into its hell.

And how, then, has it been brought down, this grace?

Christian philosophy

The history of Christian philosophy is the story. For two thousand years doctors and saints have pleaded the sinfulness of their kith and kind and the irresponsibility of the Most High. For two thousand years Christendom has re-echoed the self-accusations of distraught and distempered souls and given its hourly tithe of mutilated lives in dreadful expiation. For two thousand years humanity, blindled through shame and suffering, has cried its *culpa*

mea into impitiable ears. For two thousand years man has apologized for God.

Yet in these two millennia a great change has come over the conception of God and over the human regard of the problem of evil. The major premise—the goodness of truth—has not been brought into question, nor has the method of justifying this premise by a shift from the human to the cosmic perspective been relinquished, but the dress of the argument, that which gives to it the color of persuasion, has undergone an entire transformation. The nature of God himself has been philosophically reconstructed, and for the sole (though unconscious) purpose, I believe, of maintaining his morality. This transformation I would briefly sketch. Conception of God

III

The primary conception of God's nature—that with which Catholic orthodoxy starts, and which the more conservative churches and the orthodox laities still maintain—is what I should term the Hebraic conception. This is the conception of a God glorified by his creation and praised by his creatures: Hebrew psalms

> The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament sheweth his handiwork.

Or again—

> All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee.
>
> They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power;
>
> To make known to the sons of men his mighty acts, and the glorious majesty of the kingdom.

God, in this view, is concerned for the veneration of his creatures; he is jealous of their attention, and

glories in their praise; even the divine mercy is manfested not as the compassionate rescue of the afflicted creature, but as a display of the benignity of the creator.

St. Augustine

Such already is the God of Augustine, and hence of historic orthodoxy. From that condemnation, says the great father, which came upon mankind as a result of the sin of the parents, "none can ever be freed, but by the free and gracious mercy of God, which makes a separation of mankind, to shew in one of the remainders the power of grace, and in the other the revenge of justice. Both which could not be expressed upon all mankind, for if all had tasted of the punishments of justice, the grace and mercy of the Redeemer had had no place in any; and again, if all had been redeemed from death, there had been no object left for the manifestation of God's justice; but now there is more left than taken to mercy, that so it appear what was due unto all, without any impeachment of God's justice, who notwithstanding having delivered so many, has herein bound us forever to praise his gracious commiseration."

St. Bernard

It is the business of creation to extol its Lord and Maker, even election and damnation are of a piece with the argument. "The Church," saith St. Bernard, "is wonderfully concealed in the bosom of a blessed predestination and in the mass of a miserable damnation." Calvin puts the matter in words which only the sternness of his unlovely personality can preserve from mockery:

Calvin

> It is unreasonable that man should scrutinize with impunity those things which the Lord has determined to be hidden in himself; and investigate, even from eternity, that sublimity of wisdom which God would have us to adore and not comprehend, to promote our admiration of his glory.

This, as preface to the credo:

Predestination

We assert, that by an eternal and immutable counsel, God has once for all determined, both whom he would admit to salvation, and whom he would condemn to destruction. We affirm that this counsel, as far as concerns the elect, is founded on his gratuitous mercy, totally irrespective of human merit; but that to those whom he devotes to condemnation, the gate of life is closed by a just and irreprehensible, but incomprehensible judgment.

There remained but for Jeremy Taylor to clinch the ghastly argument by setting it in ghastly verse:

Jeremy Taylor

O mighty God,
Let not thy bruising rod
Crush our loins with an eternal pressure;
O let thy mercy be the measure,
For if thou keepest wrath in store
We all shall die
And none be left to glorify
Thy name, and tell
How thou hast saved our souls from hell.

The modern mind shudders as it calls the roll of these grim *defensores fidei.* They have made their God monstrous with reason, and with the name of holiness they have apotheosized inhumanity. Their words seem to be seasoned in cruelty, and their ready consignment of the major portion of their fellow men to eternal damnation "for the better glory of God" sounds like terrible blasphemy. Nevertheless, there is a certain raw-boned strength in all this thinking that has not even yet lost its imaginative appeal, there is human passion at the core of it, and human pain. We may feel a certain mingling of amusement with sympathy at the subtle way in which Aquinas eludes the difficulties of the question whether God may not exact of one the relinquishment of beatitude *ad decorem universi,*

St. Thomas Aquinas

but the amusement is all gone, and only the sympathy left, when we read the words of Catherine of Siena:

St. Catherine of Siena

> Better were it for me that all should be saved, and I alone (saving ever thy charity) should sustain the pains of hell, than that I should be in paradise and all they perish damned; for greater honor and glory of thy name would it be.

For it was this Catherine who exposed herself to a flow of boiling water the while she meditated upon the pains of hell and besought her creator to accept what she thus voluntarily endured in expiation of them. Nor can we follow the great disciple of Aquinas through his remorseless Inferno without awe of the endurance with which the passion for justice can fortify the human soul.

Dante

The truth is—once we get our breath—this whole development is not humanly unintelligible. It is a harsh spectacle, but it is the outcome of harsh living. We realize this, I think, when we regard the likenesses of these by-gone thinkers: their gaunt cheeks and corded necks, their sunken eyes and the great features that stand out on the medallions. They were men who lived the lives of thinkers in the lurid intervals of war, and it is not strange that blood should have seemed to them a trifling piaculum to righteousness or that in their zest for moral goodness they should have shorn the world of loveliness.

Christian pessimism

Further, there is a solidity and consistency in their thought which the ensuing age does not present. Up to the very threshold of the eighteenth century, Christian philosophy is consistently pessimistic so far as this world is concerned. Human life received a wrong start from the first parents and it has never

been righted. The best we can make out of a bad predicament is a tolerable preparation for the life to come, and even this can be attained only by grievous denial of what seems good and attractive to us here. All things mundane are polluted, and all the seeming sweetness of nature is unclean.

A fallen world

This, I say, is the consistent view of a world which has fallen from grace, and it makes easier our understanding of the brutal acceptance of the divine condemnation, giving, too, a kind of picturesque sturdiness to the thought of men who could live up to such a view. We realize, of course, that they saved their cosmos to optimism by the introduction of a world of bliss beyond—by the *beata vita* for which this life is preparatory, but at least there was nothing cowardly in their way of facing the hard preparation.

As much can not be said for the eighteenth century. From Leibnitz onward its whole smooth, self-satisfied course betrays a substantial participation in the good things of this life. This world is the best possible of worlds, so good, in fact, that once its procedure was inaugurated, the Almighty became superfluous: harmony, pre-established from the day of creation, pervades all its elements. In the beginning God completed his work and saw that it was good, and the repose of the seventh day has never since been broken. This implication of the non-interference of the creator in his handiwork led inevitably to the deism of the century: a creator, it was conceded, was necessary to the first operation of the world-engine, but the operation begun, nature was the sufficient explanation of its continuation, God was thenceforth otiose.

Pre-established harmony

Deistic theology

Thus with an altered view of life we get an altered conception of God's nature. The life of this world is looked upon with an optimism so smug and complacent that man is jealous even of the suggestion of divine interference in its orderly course. Nothing is at fault; nothing here ought to be changed; it is for the creator to keep hands off lest he mar his achievement. God can add nothing to the world, and if the world can be said to glorify God it is in the sense in which a prodigiously endowed child confers credit upon his puzzled parents. Of course God is already at a vast remove from humanity; the world, with all its furniture, is but his toy, his bauble, a six days' plaything, and already we have in prediction the completer separation which the next century is to bring.

I can not better illustrate the transformation in men's thought that takes place in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries than by quoting briefly from an English poet of each of these centuries. The seventeenth century opens with Mediævalism—if so we may term the elder view—still dominant. All the learning of the Renaissance, all the emancipation of the Reformation, has not sufficed to dissipate in Christian philosophy its gloomy appraisal of the worldly life nor to alter its conception of God as a being to be magnified by mortal tribulation. Indeed, we seem to meet an accentuation of these traits in the Puritanic reaction against the humanism of a paganizing lay scholarship. I quote, however, not from a Puritan, but a convert from

John Donne

Catholicism to the Church of England—from Doctor Donne's *Anatomy of the World,* wherein "the

frailty and the decay of this whole world is represented":

An Anatomy of the World

Well died the world, that we might live to see
This world of wit, in his anatomy;
No evil wants his good; so wilder heirs
Bedew their father's tombs with forcéd tears,
Whose state requites their loss: whiles thus we gain,
Well may we walk in blacks, but not complain.

So the poem opens, setting its hypothesis. The meaning of human endeavor is thus set forth:

Let no man say, the world itself being dead,
'Tis labor lost to have discoveréd
The world's infirmities, since there is none
Alive to study this dissection;
For there's a kind of world remaining still,
Though she which did inanimate and fill
The world, be gone, yet in this last long night,
Her ghost doth walk, that is, a glimmering light,
A faint weak love of virtue and of good,
Reflect from her, on them which understood
Her worth; and though she have shut in all day,
The twilight of her memory doth stay;
Which, from the carcass of the old world free,
Creates a new world, and new creatures be
Produced; the matter and the stuff of this,
Her virtue, and the form our practice is. . .

So man ghostly walks, mid the slow decay of his earthly paradise—

This man, whom God did woo, and loth to attend
Till man came up, did down to man descend,
This man so great, that all that is, is his,
O what a trifle, and poor thing he is! . .
Be more than man, or thou'rt less than an ant.
. . . . so is the whole world's frame
Quite out of joint, almost created lame:
For, before God had made up all the rest,
Corruption entered, and deprav'd the best. . .

Donne's stiffly articulated verse seems somehow particularly appropriate to the theology it conveys.

It moves with the rattly swing of the dance of death, and it gives us a sense of the discords and jars of creation which the same theology entirely misses in the symphonic epic of his great contemporary. With all his Puritanism Milton possessed the humanist's love of beauty, so transforming even diabolism into grandeur; his imagination was infinitely nobler than his thought, and his poetry is hence a poorer medium for this thought than is that of the more narrowly theological divine. Yet Donne himself has imagination, only it does not move in the domain of beauty: lurid, powerful, it lights deep vistas with its sudden glows; flares and expires, like the very reflection of the pent and smouldering genius of the Mediæval mind. It is unlovely, but it is not without fascination, and it commands respect.

John Milton

Respect is an attitude which it is extremely difficult to maintain in our regard of the work of that eighteenth-century poet who travestied Doctor Donne. Pope's shallow and complacent verse is perfectly adapted to the shallow and complacent philosophy of a shallow and complacent century. It belongs to a period when men made conspicuous display of their clothes and their table manners; and it is irksome for us of an inherital period (perhaps because we feel so keenly the vexatiousness of the inheritance) to struggle into sympathy with it. None the less, in the dialectic of history the eighteenth century occupies a solid moment, which we must understand if we are to advance to comprehension of our own ways of thinking. And of all its spokesmen Pope is by odds the most loquaciously adept. With other men, while their philosophies are not

Alexander Pope

profound, they have not lost the beauty of an older humanism or the earnestness of the older asceticism; but with Pope thought is only a special kind of elegance and truth is only timeliness.

The very key-note of Pope's *Essay on Man* is the key-note of the mental lightness of his age. Milton had inaugurated his great poem, in the preceding century, with the prayer:

> What in me is dark
> Illumine, what is low raise and support;
> That to the height of this great Argument
> I may assert Eternal Providence,
> And justify the ways of God to men.

Milton's invocation

Pope gives us his measure in

> Laugh where we must, be candid where we can;
> But vindicate the ways of God to Man.

And the fall from reverence to conformity, from "justification" to "vindication," is but the moral token of the intellectual descent which is typified.

I need not quote Pope's familiar epistles at any length. A few summarizing verses will suffice to re-establish their general context and import:

> All Nature is but Art, unknown to thee;
> All Chance, Direction, which thou canst not see;
> All Discord, Harmony not understood;
> All partial Evil, universal Good:
> And, spite of Pride, in erring Reason's spite,
> One truth is clear, *Whatever is, is right.*

Essay on Man

We have to read this twice and thrice, and read it yet again, before we begin to realize that here, in mean and dingy littleness, is preserved the mere logic of Augustine's fine utterances:

> For God would never have foreknown vice in any work of his, angel or man, but that he knew in like manner what good

De Civitate Dei

use to put it unto, so making the world's course, like a fair poem, more gracious by antithetic figures. . .

For as a picture shows well though it have black colors in divers places, so the universe is most fair, for all these stains of sins, which notwithstanding, being weighed by themselves, do disgrace the luster of it. . .

What is the secret of the changed effect? It is a change in the color of life. In Augustine the thought springs from the fresh ardors of a beauty-loving soul. When it recurs in Calvin, for all its bony intellectuality, it is saved by the moral sternness of the thinker. But in the age of Pope we are well aware that neither the beauty of the cosmos nor its moral order was felt to be necessary to its human comprehension or to enhance men's satisfaction with life as they found it. Christian philosophy was a mental pose, an act of conformity, and its glib recitation serves only to expound its spiritual hollowness. Orthodoxy had been lived through; beauty and goodness in turn it had lost; and at last its well-hinged logic showed forth with all the neat articulation, and all the unloveliness, of a blanched and mounted skeleton.

IV

Nineteenth Century optimism

It is small wonder that the succeeding century, in the full swing of a buoyant optimism, should have felt the need of a revivified philosophy and a reinvigorated faith. It is hardly wonderful that it should have sought the new light with as little shift as possible from the orthodoxy of the centuries past, and it is interesting to see in just what directions the shift which it does make carries it.

The nineteenth-century addition to Christian philosophy is in three respects striking. First, it is at

one with historic orthodoxy in justifying creation from God's point of view rather than from man's; it is cosmist rather than humanist. Second, it differs from the earlier orthodoxy and agrees with the eighteenth century in its optimistic appraisal of this life. Third, its conception of God's nature is revolutionary.

The Deity as Patriarch

I have said that the early Christian conception of the divine nature was Hebraic. God was regarded as the father, but his fathership was rather that of the patriarchal head of the clan than of the sire of an only son. He was a father who was also a ruler, and in his character of ruler he was King of Glory, and jealous of his glorification. He was the Lord of Praise,

> Placable if his mind and ways were guessed,—

though only revelation could insure the guessing. The conception is of a God intensely interested in the world he has created, and having such concern for it that to mistake his meaning must cost his creatures dear.

Eighteenth Century self-satisfaction

We have seen how by the eighteenth century this intense and personal interest has waned. The deistic creator who sets the clock-work of the universe going derives only an indifferent edification from his contemplation of its smooth running. Occasionally he may interfere, working a miracle less for the benefit of creation than for the assuagement of his own ennui, but on the whole he is content to let the goodness of his work manifest itself in its mechanism. This is the eighteenth-century view (exaggerated, no doubt, but only to its fulfilled logic), and in a sense it affords a transition to the

introduction of the absolutely *fainéant* deity of the nineteenth century; but the change is really revolutionary.

In the poem from which I have just cited, Browning concedes to the universe another and diviner being than the "placable" Setebos:

Caliban upon Setebos

> There may be something quiet o'er his head,
> Out of his reach, that feels nor joy nor grief,
> Since both derive from weakness in some way.

Ever sure in his theologizing instinct, Browning is quite right here in setting the *fainéant* deity at an absolute remove from the creative: the one can not properly be derived from the other. It is a new and revolutionary conception of God which the transcendentalists of the nineteenth century introduce into Christian philosophy.

The very word *transcendental* characterizes the revolution. God is set at an infinite remove from his creation. He is exalted to a perfection so absolute that it can not in the remotest way reflect our sullied life, and so lonely that it can not break its solitudes with the faintest compassion for mortal pain. Things mortal are not presented to the Absolute as things mortal: they appear to it only as the subtile and vanishing complexions of an experience in which time and passion are eternally transmuted into timelessness and passionlessness. It knows mortality only *sub specie æternitatis*—as once for all robbed of its mortal poignancy. Knowing the compensations of Eternal Being, it is content to take its eternal repose in the actionless activity of this knowledge.

The Absolute

> This Quiet, all it hath a mind to, doth,
> Esteemeth stars the outposts of its couch,
> But never spends much thought nor care that way.

This is the God with which German metaphysics has replaced the personal and concerned creator of Hebraic faith. But it is obvious that in its mere transcendency such a God is impossible as the object of Christian belief; and, in fact, I am presenting but half the picture in emphasizing the transcendency. For not only is the God of transcendental philosophy an utterly transcendent being, but—strange contradiction!—he possesses the precisely opposite quality in as utter a degree. The absolute experience is not only hopelessly remote from human experience, but it is also unwaveringly *immanent* in human experience. *Totum in toto et in parte totum:* immanence, the sensible contrary of transcendence, is made the co-attribute of God.

Transcendental theology

I can not enter into the shrewd, and logistically unanswerable, logic which makes this contradiction appeal to men's minds as "the better reason"; but I do wish to show (since, after all, our logic is but our shamed apology for faith) something of the force of its spiritual appeal. And this appeal, I believe, is due in large part to the admiration for quiet excited by an unquiet age, and again to the friendliness and sympathy with which a divine immanence is felt to endow a Nature which men have come so wistfully to love. Peace and sympathy—their antithesis to our perturbed modernity has made these seem divine. In place of a Heavenly King, ruling the universe with a sure and steady hand, we have enthroned a Prince of an unvexed and untempted Peace; in place of a watchful and omnipresent Providence, argus-eyed for the fall of a sparrow or the numbering of our hairs, we have

Peace and Sympathy

trusted for consolation in the immanence of an Abiding Presence.

Josiah Royce

"Despite the vastness, the variety, the thrilling complexity of the life of the finite world," says Josiah Royce, "the ultimate unity is not far from any one of us. All variety of idea and object is subject, as we have seen, to the unity of the purpose wherein we alone live. Even at this moment, yes, even if we transiently forget the fact, we mean the Absolute. We win the presence of God when we most flee. We have no other dwelling-place but the single unity of the divine consciousness. In the light of the eternal we are manifest, and even this very passing instant pulsates with a life that all the worlds are needed to express. In vain would we wander in darkness; we are eternally at home in God."

Immanent in human experience, yet forever transcending experience, as near to life as a mirrored reflection yet as absolutely cut off from it as is mirrored space from real space,—this nineteenth-century conception of the divine nature is no new one in history. It is as ancient as Brahm in the thought of India. It is the breath of life to the Neo-Platonists: "Transcending all bodies is soul, transcending souls is intellect, transcending intellectual being is the One"; so Proclus ascends to the selfless essence of God, the One before all who is also the One in all, and is the realization and perfection of the Circle of Being. Even in the new world the metaphysically minded Aztecs adumbrate the conception: for above their dæmonic pantheon, Tezcatlipoca personates the transcendent yet immanent creator:

Proclus

O puissant Lord, under whose wings we seek protection and shelter, thou art invisible and impalpable as air and night!

O our very good Lord, who castest thy shadow about all who approach thee, even as a tree tall and great, thou art invisible and impalpable and thy glance penetrateth the rocks and to the heart of trees, beholding all that is there concealed. It is for this that thou seest and understandest that which is in our hearts and in our thoughts. Before thee our souls are as a film of smoke or of fog vanishing from the earth! Aztec prayer

The conception, explicit or implicit, occurs thus in many non-Christian contexts, but with this significant difference: that in these diverse thought media it is almost invariably an accompaniment of pessimism. This is obvious enough in India: life is one perpetual degeneration from the pure being of Brahm, and the acme of bliss is the soul's utter submergence in the impersonal indifference of the One. It is no less obvious with the later Platonists. Plato himself, with an almost shifty adroitness, after stating, in the *Timæus,* that God, in his goodness, patterned the world after the perfect pattern of his own being, "for the deeds of the best could never be or have been other than the fairest," goes on to apologize for the world's imperfections on the score that the deity turned over the details of creation to lesser hands. It was inevitable that disciples of his philosophy, fallen upon evil days, should have converted this into a doctrine of progressive descent, of creative degeneration, such as indeed we find in that Neo-Platonic pessimism which so mirrors that of India that we are accustomed to see in it a borrowing from the Orient. Plato's Demiurge

But I believe that when we note how similar conceptions in America seem to lead to a similar pessimism, our conviction that the conception is

itself author of the pessimism will gain strength. For the Aztec betrays a sophisticated world-weariness worthy of disciples of Schopenhauer. When a child was born into the world it was addressed:

New and Old World pessimism

> You are come into a world where your parents live mid toils and fatigues, where there are broiling heats and windy chills, where there is neither pleasure nor contentment, for it is a place of labors, of torments, and of cares.

And even of a dead king they could only pray:

> Thou hast given him to taste in this world a few of the sweetnesses and suavities which thou hast made to pass before his eyes like will-o'-wisps which vanish in being born.

Pessimism, then, seems to have been the natural accompaniment of this conception of an immanent and transcendent God in all centuries save the nineteenth. How are we to account for the new value which this century has placed upon the conception?

The answer is complex.

Historically the nineteenth century is heritor of eighteenth century optimism. The naturalism of the eighteenth century was a reaction against the pessimism of the earlier ascetic Christianity; its mood was one of contentment with nature and its moral a readiness to accept and find good nature's self-revelation. The doctrine of evolution in the nineteenth century seemed to be this revelation: it seemed to mean progressive realization of the good. The conditions of modern life have favored this interpretation, and philosophy and theology alike have been caught in its optimistic swing. Hegel, it has been said, gives us in his dialectic evolution the inner interpretation of what Spencer interprets outwardly: the two systems are complementary narratives of world-progress.

Evolution and optimism

With the historical pressure all toward optimism, it is no marvel that *logic* (ever an accommodating servant) easily adapts itself to the push of circumstance. And, as a matter of fact, the adaptation is not strained. The dialectic deduction of nature from God must, to be sure, be regarded as a *descent* —as Platonist, Gnostic and Hindu have regarded it—so long as your thinker maintains the cosmic, the ontological point of departure; but if instead his thinking start from human powers of knowing, if his deduction be from the psychology of human reasoning, first analyzed and then inductively generalized as a predicate of the universe, then the process is legitimately interpreted as an *ascent,* an evolution. And this is precisely what German transcendentalism has done. Kant psychologized metaphysics; and in the hands of the philosophers of the absolute, especially Hegel, human thought-processes were treated as epitome and mirror of the being of the world. The starting-point was humanistic and hence the goal of perfection was found to be an implication of human nature, emerging from human nature by a smooth and felicitous progression.

Facile logic

German idealism

To be sure, in so far as this progression was withdrawn from time we have as the fond of this reasoning the unhappy quibble of timeless change, an antinomy of points of view (the human and the absolute) that to the lay mind is insoluble, but this difficulty is one readily concealed by cloudy words, for the μίμησις and μέθεξις of Plato are terms descriptive of a no more irreconcilable conciliation than are the "transfusion," "transmutation," and "transcendency" of the Absolutists.

Cloudy words

But history urged and logic admitted optimism, and the times had need of a new conception of God. There remains but to ask how far this conception answers the needs of its generation.

Protestant attitudes

Now there are undoubtedly some thousands of Protestant clergymen who, with the more informed of their laity, hold and find comfort in the transcendentalist idea of God. But I regard it as undeniable that the mass, even of enlightened Protestantism, is still in the Reformation, or at most is not beyond the eighteenth century, whereas Catholicism, as we know, is still assertively Mediæval. Unchurched Christendom is in the main eighteenth century. On the other hand, by underground channels—Theosophy, New Thought, Christian Science —Asiatic philosophy is undoubtedly inflowing to an ever-rising flood. The assimilation of transcendentalist ideas seems to show more vitality outside than inside orthodoxy.

Asiatic influence

But what of the intellectual leadership—the thought of the best minds?

Here we have no right to turn to philosophers; it is philosophy that we are judging. But we have a right to turn to the poets, for the poetry for which any generation cares is just index of the spiritual development of that generation. And judged by this standard of poetry, I think we can say that, in the English-speaking world at least, transcendentalism has failed. I do not mean to say that it has failed to command belief—that were a rash and hasty judgment; nor yet that it has failed to bring a certain elegiac comfort into many lives. But just here is my point: the comfort that it has brought is elegiac; it is the comfort of resignation.

The poets

Transcendentalism has failed to preserve optimism even with the advantage of the tremendous optimistic momentum which had been given by eighteenth-century French humanitarianism and English naturalism.

Elegiac tone

The elegiac tone of modern poetry is too conspicuous to need much illustration. Yet in a certain instance there is indicated a trend so significant that I can not refrain from pointing it. Two of the most widely read of modern English poems appeared within a decade in the middle of the nineteenth century. The first to appear and the first to take and hold the sympathy of the modern mood was Tennyson's *In Memoriam*. It is a poem which, perhaps best of all, voices the elegiacism of the Victorian epoch: the mingling of wistful faith and material doubt, of passionate optimistic hope and dread of compelling pessimism. The immanent and transcendent God is there, the God far-off and perfect, who transforms the compelling evil of experience into some final blessing—

> O yet we trust that somehow good
> Will be the final goal of ill . . .

and the evolutional ascent is there, but the upward-straining mortal vision descries only a mounting gloom betwixt humanity and God; the heaviness of doubt outbalances the buoyancy of faith:

In Memoriam

> I falter where I firmly trod,
> And falling with my weight of cares
> Upon the great world's altar-stairs
> That slope through darkness up to God,
>
> I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
> And gather dust and chaff, and call
> To what I feel is Lord of all,
> And faintly trust the larger hope.

This is the first of the two poems, read and reread for a generation. The second, composed a ten-year later, after lying almost unknown for a generation, is now, I venture to guess, read a hundred times to the once of *In Memoriam,* and quoted thrice a hundred. And yet the *Rubaiyat* of Fitz-Gerald's Omar owns not even the lame faith of Tennyson. It is pessimistic to the core, shot through with the impotence and pain of hopelessness. As a man, the best that Omar can offer is a Cyrenaic advice to snare the pleasures of an evanescent sensation, to banish thought in joyless laughter, and to meet death with Stoic dignity—

Rubaiyat of Omar Khayyam

> So when the Angel of the darker Drink
> At last shall find you by the river-brink,
> And, offering his Cup, invite your Soul
> Forth to your Lips to quaff—you shall not shrink.

And as to God, his best is an indifference that is akin to blasphemy:

> O Thou, who Man of baser Earth didst make,
> And ev'n with Paradise devise the Snake:
> For all the Sin wherewith the Face of Man
> Is blacken'd—Man's forgiveness give—and take!

Surely the captivation in which this poem holds the modern mood betrays the utter bankruptcy of transcendental optimism!

V

In our running review we have traced the development of a great conception, that of a being whose character is at once perfect truth and perfect goodness and perfect beauty. At the outset this being is an Emperor-God, throned above a world which is his foot-stool; at the end the being is the veritable

Emperor-God

anima mundi regarded as the saving transfiguration of a blotched and blemished world of experience.

Anima Mundi

At the outset the truth and goodness and beauty of God could be made to seem at least imaginatively consistent with the falsities and evils and ugliness of life owing to the dramatic separation of creator and creation, of king and kingdom, of judge and judged. At the end we find the vividness of experience is too blindingly real to permit the mind to perceive and hold those logical subtleties which seek to eliminate sin and error merely by putting a new face on a sullied universe: the transcendental outlook may mean salvation, but it is not the salvation for which a sick and distressful humanity yearns.

Is the conception of God, then—the Christian conception—bankrupt? Is there no counsel for a feverish and distempered age save the *sparge rosas* of a Horace, no solace save an Omar's pitiful flytings with Fate?

Frankly, the orthodox conception, whether Hebraic, deistic, or transcendental, in so far as it rests upon the metaphysical trinitarianism which unites in the divine person all the goodness and beauty and truth of the world, making these the world's *whole* truth—frankly, this conception is bankrupt. It runs against the grain of experience, and however easy it is for human nature to hold to faiths that are contrary to reason, it is impossible for it long to continue in beliefs that cross the testimony of eyes and ears and inquisitive fingers: even the doubting Thomas was convinced of his Lord's beatific being by the touch of his grievous corporeal wounds.

Metaphysical orthodoxy bankrupt

But the orthodox conception is by no means the

only possible, nor even the only Christian, conception of the divine nature. Along with Hebrew and Greek, Persian doctrines entered into the making of Christianity. Historically, to be sure, Manichæan dualism has always been heresy—orthodox Christianity would none of it—but the tale of history is yet in the telling, and in the modern reversion to Omar's keen Persian sense of a twy-bladed living we seem to find the heresy resurgent, as ever it must be so long as experience itself is Manichæan.

Persian dualism

In its essence the Manichæan conception is this: The universe is an interweave of good and evil, of ugliness and beauty. Truth is no attribute of a part of these qualities, denied of the other parts; the powers of darkness are as real as the powers of light: they are genuine *powers,* capable of designing and wreaking ill. And God is no embodiment of truth's totality; rather he is all goodness and beauty, the leader of the powers of light against the powers of darkness in a struggle that is eternal.

God as Hero

God, on this view, is neither all-knowing nor all-powerful. The struggle in which he is engaged—the struggle which appears to us as the evolution of the world, as the dramatic action of creation—is no illusory, theatrical struggle; it is a real and tense conflict in which each combatant, the good and the evil, must be eternally vigilant or eternally overcome.

Man as soldier

The part of man in this struggle is heroic. Man is placed by his creator in the van of the conflict against the powers of cosmic night, and placed there because there is real and urgent need of human prowess in the fight. It is the post of honor and of danger, and the reward of valiancy and fortitude

is the glory of conquest over the enemy of God and man.

In the Hebrew view, man is the creature and servitor of his all-powerful Lord and King. It is no human part to lift pretending eyes to the awful majesty of the divine ruler or curiously strive to pierce the veil of immensity which dimly magnifies the huge and distant seat of the Almighty: "He holdeth back the face of his throne and spreadeth his cloud upon it." In the Persian view, on the other hand, man is the comrade and helper of God. Even Khayyam, though the pall of Moslem fatalism had robbed this partnership of its militant spirit, yet feels in a wistful, hypothetic mood the tug of its friendly humanism:

The seat of the Almighty

> Ah, Love! could you and I with Him conspire
> To grasp this sorry Scheme of Things entire,
> Would we not shatter it to bits—and then
> Remould it nearer to the Heart's Desire?

"Could you and I with Him conspire!" . . . The strength of this humanistic heresy lies just in the fact that "you and I" are valued and needed partners in his combat with evil and ugliness. Man is given a doughty and dignified position in "the Scheme of Things," and because God himself owns his need of man the divine wisdom and beauty become object of a chivalrous and devoted love rather than of a prostrate adoration.

The Scheme of Things

This is humanism—a philosophy and theology of experience as we know and name experience in the chance and change of every-day living, experience raw and fresh and untransmuted. It is true to life. It is not untrue to religion. Is it false to logic? I believe not.

Near the beginning of this essay I said that the identification of all truth with the goodness and beauty of God could not have satisfied human reason save for the duplicitous meaning of the measures of truth, the duplicity of a goodness that is in part beauty and in part something other than beauty. Let us ask more narrowly after the relationship of these ideas.

Truths are *moral* and *æsthetic*

The values of truth—and by this I mean the qualities of realities which make them seem worth while to human living—are of two sorts: they are *moral* and they are *æsthetic*. No matter which standard we are concerned with, the desirable truths, the realities that do seem worth while, we call the *Good*. "The Good," says Aristotle, "is that at which all things aim"; and Plato before him, as I have already quoted, has defined the Good as "that for the sake of which something else is done," as an *end* of action.

Now for expediency in talk we may be justified in speaking of custom and convenance, of merely *moral* conduct, as good; but it is certainly not a good in this teleological sense. Goodness in conduct is a means, not an end; it is social facilitation, but society exists for something other than mere smooth running. To quote Aristotle yet again: "He who would duly enquire about the best form of a state ought first to determine which is the most eligible life"; for "the end of individuals and of states is the same," viz., the ideal life; and "the good man as such is the measure of everything." In other words, moral goodness is good only as an instrument to ideal living, in which alone is the truth of goodness.

Politics 1323a

And this ideal living, does it represent a value that is moral in some other than the root meaning of "moral," as designating the mutual concession which makes human intercourse possible, or does it represent a value that is properly to be termed "æsthetic"? I regard the latter view as the feasible one. For if we look at human ideals of life's value in the broadest mode, I see but three types of experience that stand out as goals, proximate or ultimate, of men's conscious endeavor. There is, first, happiness; there is, second, mystic union with divinity; there is, third, the zest of creative endeavor. Now all three of these are types of *experience,* of *æsthêsis,* of realization rather than of preparation. They are in each case the end and object of moral conduct, and in themselves are non-moral. Each is properly æsthetic, though of course it is doing violence to our common speech to infer that each thereby involves an ideal of beauty. But let us consider them case by case.

Three goals of conscious endeavor

The ideal of happiness may be (1) mere sensuous delight, the Cyrenaic's lustful indulgence of perception and appetite; it is that pleasure for the power of which, says Plato, your noble nature feels "an instinctive repugnance and extreme detestation." Again (2) happiness may mean, as Aristotle would have it, "virtuous activity," but Aristotle reasons in a circle, for "virtue" is for him "human excellence," and his whole eudæmonism resolves virtue into an undefined "right living": *ἀγαθόν* is in *εὐδαιμονία*, *εὐδαιμονία* is in *ἀρετή*, whence *ἀγαθόν* is in *ἀρετή*, it is a fruitless quest. Finally (3) happiness may mean supersensuous ecstasy, be it the intoxication of thought or the bliss of beatific vision. If

(1) Happiness

happiness have any other meaning than these three, then it is an incident and not an end of conduct.

(2) Mysticism

Now the third of these meanings I take to be identical with that ideal of mystic union which regards such union as a state of conscious felicity. For mystic union may, of course, be of the Oriental, pessimistic type—an "absorption" which is no more nor less than annihilation. But if annihilation is not meant, if what is meant be a state of unalloyed and unaffected bliss, then we are back to the paradisal ideal of orthodox Christianity, and this ideal I have maintained is out of the modern temper.

I do not question that some men may find their life's ideal in the most material Cyrenaicism. I do not doubt that many ascetic souls have sold the happiness of this life for felicity in a life to come, or that many saintly ones have found in this life moments of bliss that have effaced for them all sense of life's encompassing evils. But I do affirm that for the normal mind of our period such ideals are impossible as the true and universal measures of goodness.

(3) Creative activity

There remains, then, but the one other form of *æsthêsis,* the truly æsthetic zest of creative endeavor. This is truly æsthetic because it identifies, as Plato was ever instinctively identifying, the good and the beautiful. The essence of the ideal has ever been beauty, in so far as the ideal has affected human conduct: it is the state not yet realized, but challenging the effort to realization, the pattern which, because it is an ever-recessive pattern, is ever-divine, whose actualization is the motive and the despair and hence the life of an evolving world. In the light of our meager achievements imagination charts

mighty conquests of the domain of darkness, patterning empires of wonder peopled by forms lovely and divine, while beyond them and beyond in the bowels of the cosmic gloom, dimly emergent, yet nobler gods uprear Titanic forms.

Life is action

Life is action. Action is condemnation of the present reality for the sake of the ideal. We live in our idealizations, which is to say that we live in the conquering endeavor of an ever-creative world. For a living God as for living men there are beauties to be attained and there are imperfections to be overcome. This is Manichæism, and it is the philosophy of evolution as evolution is manifested to us in mortal experience.

VI

Problem of evil

Passing from the consideration of the Good to that of its opposite, we find, I believe, that the Manichæan view is the only one that gives us a square and downright solution of the problem of evil. Evils are of four sorts: immorality, sin, pain, and ugliness. Each of these, on the view taken, is as genuine a reality as is its opposite. By naming bad conduct *im*morality we do not make it mere absence of good conduct; by calling evils defects and imperfections we do not transform them into mere privatives of the good; they are genuine and forceful and creative in their own rights. We are honest with experience, accepting its several testimonies at their face values.

Immorality

And in the case of the bad, as in the case of the good, we make distinctions. Immorality, for example, resolves into inexpediency; evil between man and man is hindrance of the good life; it must

be dealt with as a problem and not as a calamity, cosmic and overpowering.

Sin

Further, it lies between man and man and not between man and God. For the evil that obtains between man and God we have another name—*sin*. If sin be a social transgression, after the analogy of our transgressions against mankind, then we have in it but a special case of immorality. But by sin we mean something more than this, something that comes home to the transgressor; sin is a breaking of troth with one's own and acknowledged ideals; it is a denial of idealization, a denial of life, and its inevitable wage is death. To sin is to violate the noble and outrage the divine in human nature.

Immorality, then, is inexpediency, human inexpediency, and it is bad because it hurts the chances of ideal living. It is not a relation that holds between man and God, and we have no right to ask, and make no sense in asking, that God be moral: "How should a man be just with God?" But that which outrages the ideal, that which is treasonable to the good, that is sin, and of that God takes account.

Pain and ugliness

Of the two objective phases of the bad, pain and ugliness, we can make similar division. For ugliness is the very denial of ideal living; it is evil made into a goal and an end; it is the utter thwarting of that beauty which is the spur of man's endeavor. Pain, on the other hand, is but a condition of struggle, a condition, even, of nobility and ideality and of the being of beauty itself. "There are combinations of pleasure and pain in lamentations," says Plato, "and in tragedy and comedy, not only

on the stage, but on the greater stage of human life."

Measures of badness

In ugliness and sin, therefore, are given the measures of the truth of badness in the universe, whereas pain which is a symptom of a striving world-nature, and faulty endeavor which is a symptom of striving human nature, are signs of life and of an up-struggling mind; they are token of cosmic health, if health means progress.

Some of the sorriest muddles in which human thinking has been embogged have been the consequence of confusion of the instrumental and the final goods and bads of experience. We have sadly over-strained our adjectives in applying "good" and "bad" to so diverse contrasts. A shrewd instance is Milton's nobly infernal Satan throned in hell,

Satan

> by merit raised
> To that bad eminence.

Indeed, Milton's whole purpose comes precious near fiasco from the very fact that Satan's sin is mainly immorality, whereas his Titanic revolt against Omnipotence is in itself beautiful. For what makes beauty in human character is never its morality, but always its nobility, and it is therefore not wonderful that the theologian should have lost to the poet, for the poet's insight was the true one.

Error of asceticism

The whole error of asceticism has lain just here. In its effort to avoid the inexpediencies of life it has denied the possibility of beautiful living. The theological result is a fearful dichotomy of existence: a wallowing in ugliness here below for the sake of a safe and tame paradise hereafter. When I was in my sixth or seventh year I had a dream which so stung my conscience that its memory has re-

A dream

mained ever fresh. In my dream I thought that the choice of heaven or hell was placed before me. Heaven, as I saw it, was full of silvery clouds and silvery-winged harpers and there was a great light in its midst which was the throne of God, and it was reached by three little wooden stairs. Hell was a battlemented castle rising from a bottomless gloom, yet below where I stood so that I could look over into it. Now in my dream I knew that I *ought* to choose heaven, but I looked down into hell once, and twice, and thrice, and I saw in it braziers of burning fire, and demons black and red and demons winged and demons in the shapes of fantastic and monstrous beasts, and I saw there a tall knight clad all in sable armor . . . . and in my dream I chose hell.

In this dream the troublesome "ought" that lay upon my conscience was moral; the choice was æsthetic and instinctive. In the tale of *Aucassin and Nicolete,* Aucassin answers the threat of hell in this wise:

Aucassin and Nicolete

> In Paradise what have I to win? Therein I seek not to enter, but only to have Nicolete, my sweet lady that I love so well. For into Paradise go none but such folk as I shall tell thee now: Thither go these same old priests, the halt old men and maimed, who all day and night cower continually before the altars and in the crypts; and such folk as wear old amices and old clouted frocks, and naked folk and shoeless, and covered with sores, perishing of hunger and thirst, and of cold, and of little ease. These be they that go into Paradise, and with them have I naught to make. But into Hell would I fain go; for into Hell fare the goodly clerks, and goodly knights that fall in tourneys and great wars, and stout men at arms, and all men noble. With these would I liefly go. And thither pass the sweet ladies and courteous that have two lovers, or three, and their lords also thereto. Thither goes the gold, and the silver, and cloth of vair, and cloth of gris, and harpers and

makers, and the prince of this world. With these would I gladly go, let me but have with me Nicolete, my sweetest lady.[1]

Between the tame felicities of an ascetic's paradise and the red and burning magnificence of hell there is but one choice, and that the Pagan choice. Between a world without suffering and a world without nobility we can not hesitate. And I think there is no more terrible—because none so human—arraignment of the God of the theologians than in the fifth canto of the Divine Comedy:

Francesca da Rimini

> Se fosse amico il Re dell' universo,
> Noi pregheremmo lui per la tua pace,
> Poichè hai pietà del nostro mal perverso.

Francesca is infinitely nobler than the Most Catholic King of the Universe, infinitely nobler than the God who has punished her; and so, in the face of that infinite justice he is sent to uphold, the poet justifies her:

> Amor, che a nullo amato amar perdona,
> Mi prese del costui piacer sì forte,
> Che, come vedi, ancor non mi abbandona.

Her human love survives triumphant mid the torments of hell, and it ennobles hell, and it glorifies hell.

Surely it is no light fact that the lasting appeal of every great religion has been its humanism and its heroism. It is not the distant perfections of God, but the near glow of the divine in the human, of the *divinity humanized,* that has drawn and held the hearts of men. This is wonderfully shown in the great religious dramatic poems. In the *Prometheus* of Æschylus the powerful and vengeful Zeus is forever ugly; it is for the Titan, punished

Prometheus

[1] Andrew Lang's translation.

because he "loved men overmuch," that the tragedy awakens a noble and enduring pity. In *Job* it is the colossal faith of the patriarch, "though he slay me yet will I trust him," rather than the conduct of a deity who makes of his servant a sport and a spectacle, that renders the book so passionately and so grievously human. And in Milton's epic the shudder with which we see paid the grim wage of the heaven-fallen rout—

Sublime defeat

> Sublime with expectation when to see
> In triumph issuing forth their glorious Chief;
> They saw, but other sight instead, a crowd
> Of ugly Serpents,—

this shudder at least shares their "horrid sympathy." In each case, Prometheus against Zeus, Job against Jehovah, Satan against the Almighty, it is the mortal heroism of the creature rather than the immortal might of the Creator that urges in our breasts its answering passion.

From the beginning the element in religion that has appealed most potently to mankind has been the struggle against evil, the struggle after good. And the heroes of religion have been the doughty leaders of this struggle, have been the saviors of men. Orpheus and Mithras and Mani, Moses and Mohammed, Buddha and Christ, all these have been heroic leaders of heroic men in conflict with an encompassing and powerful worker of ill. Salvation, to be felt as real, must be felt as a rescue from a real and terrible danger, and the savior, to be a hero among the saved, must perform his labor at a peril and a cost. Omnipotence and omniscience are out of place in the drama of redemption, and so the hero of this drama is never the all-powerful and

Suffering Saviors

all-wise creator, but always his human and suffering delegate.

Essential Christianity

Those Christians are right who insist that the essential article of their faith is not the nature of the God they worship, but the life of Jesus, his son and exemplar. The God who is the sum of perfections was Greek and Hindu before he was Christian, and the intolerable burden of Christian theology has ever been its notion of an omnipotent and omniprescient creator who could frame a cosmos with such a core of evil that he must sacrifice for its redemption. Such a conception is inherently contrary to sense; it violates the meanings of language; and no metaphysical sublimations can give it an enduring rationality. But the strength and the essence of the Christian faith have never resided here. Rather they have been, and must be, in the life of the Savior of men—in him who was wearied before he found rest, who was tempted before he was transfigured, who suffered pain and death before he overcame them. In the most magnificent of Christian hymns the note that clutches the souls of men is not the sublimity of the "dies iræ," but the tenderness and pain and compassion of the wonderful stanza—

The Cross

> Quærens me sedisti lassus,
> Redemisti crucem passus:
> Tantus labor non sit cassus!

The link between God and man is mutual ideality, mutual endeavor, mutual pain: in divine suffering is divine beauty.

What is at once most human and most divine in men is their power of idealizing life. Amid the balks and hurts and rigors of experience the soul

Idealism dramatizes

instinctively selects certain elements to be glorified with beauty, and this glorified life becomes the pattern of desire. Idealization is a kind of dramatization, and like all drama it selects the pertinent from the haphazard contexts of reality; it is art, and so is neglectful of non-artistic truths. But because it is art it possesses the wistfulness of all creative endeavor, and reflects the huger endeavor of cosmic creation. It spiritualizes life, not by denying the truth of ugliness and sin, but by proclaiming the unconquerable effort of the world to slough these off.

Over and over again Plato darkly affirms the high and perfect independence of other-world beauty, and yet perhaps his noblest passage is one in which, for the moment, he withdraws the divine from the quiet of celestial splendor down into the turbid and aching imperfection of man's life; and so, of the Ideal City he makes Socrates say:

The Ideal City

> In Heaven there is laid up a pattern of it, methinks, which he who desires may behold, and beholding, may set his own house in order. But whether such an one exists, or will ever exist in fact, is no matter; for he will live after the manner of that City, having nothing to do with any other.

Man's life is shot through with imperfections, yet in the vision of beauty is salvation.

The view that I have set forth is Manichæan and unorthodox, for it represents evil as real and God as a struggling God, hating sin because sin is a cosmic danger and hating ugliness because the creation of beauty is not, nor ever can be, complete. The view is unorthodox, but it may be that God himself is not orthodox.

VI. BEAUTY AND PAIN

τοῖς θεοῖς κατεσκευάσθη τὰ πράγματα δι' ἔρωτα καλῶν.
—Plato.

I

AS I was passing from the gate of the University Campus one noonday hour, I found stationed there a young man who was distributing printed papers to all comers. Mechanically I took one of the papers, glancing through it as I walked.

An atheist tract

It was made up in the form of a newspaper; but this was its title: "The Truth About God and Life"; and below, in the usual form, "Published Monthly by the Church of Homanity, Great Bend, Kansas." A religious tract? Yes,—but a religious tract from Kansas is worth inspection. Beneath the title, in italics, was printed: "Cheerful Greeting to all. This little Messenger is distributed by the Church of Humanity to introduce its great scientific discoveries to all people, that God and Souls are myths and death the final cessation of conscious life, and to teach them how and where to look for the proof."

Cataclysm

The proof is offered in the leading article, titled: "In the Destruction of Thousands of Lives by the Great Forest Fires of the Northwest is seen Sure Proof of our Great Scientific Discoveries that Gods and Souls do not Exist and that Conscious Life Ends at Death." The argument which follows is based upon the news dispatches concerning the destructive

fires of the early autumn. A few sentences will disclose its character:

Proof that there is no God

> The fires have swept with cyclonic fury through many thousands of square miles of forest destroying dozens of villages and hundreds of isolated homes. Hundreds of men, women and children perished in the flames of the forest they were taught to believe had been planted and grown by God for their special use. Many of them had loved, praised and worshiped that mental idol ever since they were heathenized in childhood. . . . . In the extinguishment of their lives is seen the sure proof that there is no God to care for them or the forest they inhabited. No being could have raised the forest and destroyed it in that way, because it shows clearly the entire absence of thought and design back of its growth and destruction. This is sure proof that the Universe contains no God who knows of the existence of those forests nor of the people who inhabited them.

It is not a new argument—this "proof" that has been stirring the mind and heart of the man in Kansas. It is crudely put, and in a manner which the veriest tyro in dialectic could show to be fallacious. And yet it is no argument to be despised. It has carried and it still carries conviction to the minds of men; nor have the answers of philosophers and theologians for twenty-five hundred years yet made clear—clear in the presence of unmerited affliction, of uncombatable disaster—how a God can be, at once all powerful, all wise, and all good, when evils such as these are possible. In every stress of human circumstance this question has arisen, and in every stress to come it will arise again so long as men need and questioningly seek salvation.

II

Yet it is not the problem so much as the cure that interests me in the tract from Great Bend.

"Cheerful Greeting to all!" What new Evangel has this Kansas prophet to offer? . . . . Alas! it is no new one: the man's discoveries are only his own, not of the race. Still in the earnestness with which he phrases them, the occasion which inspires them, there is matter for thought,—besides, as he tells us, there are three hundred members in his Church, men convinced by his reasoning.

The Evangel from Kansas

I have been asked (he writes) to point out the practical value of our discoveries that the Universe contains no god and that conscious life is permanently ended at death. Each individual is benefitted in many practical ways by a knowledge of our great discoveries. A few of these I shall enumerate:

1. It eradicates all fear of gods, devils, ghosts, sprites, and spooks.

2. It eradicates all fear of suffering after death.

3. It protects from the vice of practicing idolatry and the ignorance of believing religious superstitions and the moral crime of aiding in teaching, supporting, spreading and perpetuating them, to the utter shame and disgrace of our race and the age in which we live.

4. It enables one to give his encouragement, support and aid to the enlightening and civilizing forces in society.

5. It takes the running and government of the world out of the hands of an imaginary god and places it in the hands of the people to run and govern to suit themselves, and places the responsibility for its proper management on them instead of on gods that do not exist.

6. It furnishes the only true basis for a world-wide movement for the conservation of the natural resources of the earth. It shows our race to be adrift on a planet in space without any possible show for outside aid when it exhausts its supplies aboard. Hence the imperative necessity of conserving these supplies as the race must inevitably perish when they are exhausted.

Here, then, is the essence of the Evangel from Kansas: It abolishes superstitious fear. It teaches man to trust himself. It defines the possibilities of mortal achievement and the worth of mortal life.

Lucretius

To whom does this message carry us? To whom can it carry save to the loftiest of the Roman poets? For was it not the message of Lucretius, too, in the dark years of the corruption and decay of the Roman Republic, when men's minds were in the turmoil of uprooted faiths and humanity was blackening with blood,—was it not the message of Lucretius that the root of human evil is superstitious fear, that wisdom lies in self-control and self-trust, that the problem of life is the problem of conformity with physical nature, and that providential gods and immortal souls do not exist?

With an earnestness strange to us, so long accustomed to another type of preaching, Lucretius pleads with men to do away with their vain and helpless aspirations after a life to come, as with their idle fears of its possible horrors. To the dead he says:

De Rerum Natura, III. 894f

> Now, now, no more shall thy glad home welcome thee—
> Nay, nor dear wife and children sweet hasten to seize
> Quick kisses, touching thy heart with wordless joy.
> No more canst thou follow prosperous ways, nor be,
> E'en in their need, a strength to thy beloved!
> "Piteous," men say, "ah, piteous thou from whom
> This one dread day hath ta'en the fruits of life!"
> —Yet say they not, oh, wherefore say they not,
> "Nor unto thee abideth wone of these"?

Strange sermon, is it not, and uttered with a strange and earnest eloquence, which echoes down the centuries a deathless beauty, and chokes the voice like memories of tears.

III

Lucretius possessed a soul keenly sensitive to the hurt of life. There was with him no glozing over of the brute fact of pain or of the ugly reality of

evil. He hated these, and he hated them the more because of his clear understanding that human cruelty is not the least of their causes.

> O wretched minds of men! O blinded hearts!
> In what mad glooms, in perils of what might,
> Ye speed your little years! Nor pause to see
> How Nature pleadeth naught but that ye keep
> Bodies pain-sundered, minds redeemed from fear!

Book II. 14f

In another passage, where he is inveighing against the horrors to which Superstition may give rise,—

> tantum religio potuit suadere malorum!—

and where he is praising that "man of Greece who first raised mortal eyes to meet, and first stood forth against the horrid mien" of this most flagellant of delusions, Lucretius cites as an instance of *scelerosa atque impia facta* done in the name of religion, the sacrifice of Iphigenia in Aulis. He describes with pitying indignation the deceit practiced upon the maiden, brought to undergo a miserable death instead of to celebrate a happy marriage; he tells of the hidden knives of the attendants, the sudden terror of the maid, the grief of the father—who yet can deliver the slaughterer's stroke! And what is it all for? That a fleet may have a fortunate wind, upon a mission of war!

Epicurus

Sacrifice of Iphigenia

Ah, the evils that men do, the cruel needless evils, bayed on by the madnesses of superstition! Is it not insane obsession,—nay, to be veritably possessed of devils,—to believe, as man has hauntingly believed since the first glimmerings of thought were his, that human felicity, human success and progress, can be obtained only at the price of human agonies?

We have all shuddered at the horrible fruits of

this notion in savage life. Who has not heard of the terrible sacrifices of the Konds of India? They believed, we are told, that without a morsel of a virgin's flesh, fresh-torn from her living body, no field could wax fruitful. The idea underlying the sacrifice is magic—"sympathetic" magic, as it is fearfully named. There is in it no designed cruelty, no infliction of suffering for the sake of the spectacle (that is reserved for more sophisticated peoples); there is only the naked hideousness of practices persuaded by the cold logic of an unfounded belief.

Superstition and cruelty

A grim memorial of these forgotten horrors (so we read in the *General Report of the Census of India*) is to be seen in the Madras Museum in the form of a rude representation in wood of the head and trunk of an elephant pivoted on a stout post. To this the victim was bound head downwards and the machine was slowly turned round in the center of a crowd of worshipers who hacked and tore away scraps of flesh to bury in their fields, chanting the while a ghastly hymn, an extract from which illustrates very clearly the theory of sympathetic magic underlying the ritual:

Kond sacrifice of a virgin

> As the tears stream from thine eyes,
> So may the rain pour down in Asar;
> As the mucus trickles from thy nostrils,
> So may it drizzle at intervals;
> As thy blood gushes forth,
> So may the vegetation sprout;
> As thy gore falls in drops,
> So may the grains of rice form.

Do we say that these Konds are degenerate savages? that this is an isolated instance? That were an ill reading of the race's record. Almost the identical practice is described by Father De Smet among the Pawnees of the American prairies; and there are not wanting scholars who intimate that the tale of the sacrifice of Iphigenia is but the mythic memory of a custom once as common in Europe as

ever it has been in Asia or America,—the vicarious offering up of innocent blood to be transubstantiated into the bread of life.

Tertullian

It was not far from Lucretius' own time, in the flush of the imperial civilization, that a man of a very different temper was recording with hot and aching pen the martyrdom of Felicitas and Perpetua. "Vivia Perpetua," says the narrator, "was well born and well educated; she was married and had a son at the breast; she was about two and twenty years of age." Felicitas, her sister in martyrdom, was of humbler station; three days before the two were led into the arena, Felicitas gave birth to a daughter, in prison. One of the gaolers, mocking the birth-pangs, asked how she would bear being thrown to the beasts; she answered him: "Now I suffer alone; then another will suffer in and for me, because I also suffer for Him."

Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicitas

Moreover (proceeds the chronicle[1]) for the young women the devil had prepared a very fierce cow, provided especially for that purpose, contrary to custom, rivalling their sex also in that of the beast. And so, stripped and clothed with nets, they were led forth. The populace shuddered as they saw one young woman of delicate frame, and another with breasts still dropping from her recent childbirth. So, being recalled, they are clad in loose robes. Perpetua is first led in. She was tossed, and fell on her loins; and when she saw her tunic torn from her side, she drew it over her as a veil for her middle, rather mindful of her modesty than her suffering. Then she was called for again, and bound up her dishevelled hair; for it was not becoming for a martyr to suffer with dishevelled hair, lest she should appear to be mourning in her glory. So she rose up; and when she saw Felicitas crushed, she approached and gave her her hand, and lifted her up. And both of them stood together; and the brutality of the populace being appeased, they were recalled to the Sanavivarian gate.

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1 *Passio Perpetuæ* (R. E. Wallis).

After this other Christians were led forth; and one of them, Saturus, from one bite of the leopard was bathed with such a quantity of blood, that the populace shouted out, in mockery of Christian baptism, "Saved and Washed! Saved and Washed!" There was but one more scene:

Salvum lotum!

> And when the populace called for them into the midst, that as the sword penetrated into their body they might make their eyes partners in the murder, they rose up of their own accord, and transferred themselves whither the people wished; but they first kissed one another that they might consummate their martyrdom with the kiss of peace. . .
>
> O most brave and blessed martyrs! O truly called and chosen unto the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ! Whom whoever magnifies, and honors, and adores, assuredly ought to read these examples for the edification of the Church, not less than the olden ones, so that new virtues also may testify that one and the same Holy Spirit is always operating, even until now, and God the Father Omnipotent, and His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, whose is the glory and infinite power for ever and ever. Amen.

I have appended to Tertullian's account of a martyrdom which doubtless he witnessed, his burst of faith in God as the Father Omnipotent. *Credo quia absurdum*—"I believe *because* it is unbelievable!"—is the famous utterance of his faith in the miracle of Christianity. And here we see this impossible faith, testified in enthusiastic devotion to an all-powerful Father who yet permits such torments to his children.

Credo quia absurdum

Many hundred years later, there is another utterance, from another Churchman, on another continent, that seems to me truer to the foundations of human reason, if not to the magnificence of the human will. Fray Bernardino de Sahagun has given us page after page of calmly narrated horrors, per-

haps the most frightful in human annals—the Aztec human sacrifices. Finally he comes to the chapter detailing the circumstances of the offering of children to the gods of the waters. "They slay," he says, "each year a great number of children in the places of which I have spoken, and after they have done them to death, they cook and eat them." And there he breaks down:

Children sacrificed to Tlaloc

> I think that there can be no heart so hard as not to recoil in horror and terror and not to shed tears on hearing of a cruelty so inhuman,—nay, more than ferocious, of inspiration veritably devilish. It is certainly a thing grievous and horrible to see that our human nature can sound such degradation that fathers, obedient to the inspirations of the demon, can kill and eat their own children, without thinking that they render themselves culpable through any offense, but on the contrary believing that they make themselves pleasing to their gods. The cause of this cruel blindness, of which these poor children are victims, ought not exactly to be imputed to the natural inspiration of their fathers, who indeed shed abundant tears and give themselves to this practice with dolor of soul. Rather one should see therein the hateful and barbarous hand of Satan, our sempiternal enemy, who employs all his malignant wiles to urge on to this infernal deed. O Lord God! revenge us on this cruel enemy![2]

Historia, II. xx.

IV

There are deeds of men for which there is but one description: *Works of the Devil.* Actions such as I have been recounting belong to this category. For whether we see in these actions the mere misfortune

Works of the Devil

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[2] In an identical vein Father De Smet, nearly four centuries later, exclaims against the cruel and famous Pawnee sacrifice of a virgin for the fertilization of their fields: "In view of so much cruelty, who could mistake the agency of the arch enemy of mankind, and who would refuse to exert himself to bring these benighted nations to the knowledge of the One only true Mediator between God and Man, and of the only true sacrifice without which it is impossible to appease the Divine justice?" (*Life, Letters and Travels,* p. 988.) After reading the missionary's description of the rite it is indeed difficult not to believe in the very real presence of a very real and near devil.

of superstition, as with the Kond; or the utter degradation of human sensibility, as with the Aztec and the Roman; we can find in Nature no apology for the horrible fact.

To be sure, we see these alien instances in an exaggerated perspective. Yet human sacrifice is not so far removed from our civilization as we customarily assume—human sacrifice and mutilation.

To the Fortune of the Enterprise

Even the illuminated Greeks, we more than suspect, in all but the best moments of their intelligence, found it necessary to insure the success of their enterprises by offerings of human life. The sacrifice of Iphigenia belongs to mythic pre-history; but not so the offering of the Persian captives before the battle of Salamis. Indeed, we are reasonably convinced that in the ancient world most great engineering enterprises—fortresses, temples, bridges, viaducts—had their corners set on the bodies of human beings whose lives were propitiations to the Fortune of the structure; and we are darkly aware that more than once human skeletons have been found immured in the crumbling walls of Christian edifices. Superstition dies a slow and ghastly death.

It is a strange hypothesis, no doubt, clamping men's minds with the grim conviction that the blessings of life are to be won from a jealous and monstrous Nature only at a price of human life. It is a strange hypothesis, yet in it is to be found the

Piaculum

explanation of the thousand mad propitiations and flagellations and ascetic condemnations of the flesh which fill up the blacker chapters of our records. And who shall say that there is not some foundation in Nature herself for an idea of such dread and persistent consequence?

At all events, conceding the hypothesis, the practices are not unintelligible. We of today think little of the lives we yearly sacrifice to our industrial gods —the lives and the mutilations. Life Insurance Skyscrapers, North River Tunnels, Panama Canals,— we know well that the cost of such enterprises must be paid in men's lives, by the score. And Railroading, Ironworking, Coal Mining, the Sweatshop System,—are we not suavely indifferent to the mutilations as well as the deaths which mark the course of that triumphant Industrialism upon which we so magnificate ourselves? What is the price of a man's hand, a man's strong right arm, a man's eyes, in Pittsburgh? We shudder at the Aztec cannibalistic sacraments, but does not Mammon, too, exact his sacraments—banquets which we must share—whereof the meat is flesh of little children? To the Fortune of the Enterprise we, like the Pagan, render our holocausts and our blood-offerings; we chain men to our machines and found cities on their bones, and if any there be to demand of us, 'By what Right?' we point in complacent answer where our Pontius Pilates are washing their white hands in the high Capitols.

Blood-offerings to Industrial gods

The naked and terrible fact is that what we call Human Progress, Human Civilization, is got and always has been got at a cost which can only be computed in Human Pain. In a speech which Thucydides puts into the mouth of Pericles, in a dark moment of the war with Sparta, the hero of Athenian culture says to his fellow citizens:

Pain and Progress

> You are bound to maintain the imperial dignity of your city in which you all take pride; for you should not covet the glory unless you will endure the toil. . . . . Know that your city

has the greatest name in all the world because she has never yielded to misfortunes, but has sacrificed more lives and endured severer hardships in war than any other: wherefore also she has the greatest power of any state up to this day; and the memory of her glory will always survive. Even if we should be compelled at last to abate somewhat of our greatness (for all things have their times of growth and decay), yet will the recollection live, that, of all Hellenes, we ruled over the greatest number of Hellenic subjects; that we withstood our enemies, whether single or united, in the most terrible wars, and that we were the inhabitants of a city endowed with every sort of wealth and greatness.[3]

The glory that was Greece

The tremendous price that was paid for "the glory that was Greece"—and so for our civilization in the large respect in which it is still Greek—appears with unexampled eloquence in yet another passage in which Thucydides speaks of a later period of the long wars:

When troubles had once begun in the cities those who followed carried the revolutionary spirit further and further, and determined to outdo the report of all who had preceded them by the ingenuity of their enterprises and the atrocity of their revenges.

The meaning of words had no longer the same relation to things, but was changed by them as they thought proper. Reckless daring was held to be loyal courage; prudent delay was the excuse of a coward; moderation was the disguise of unmanly weakness; to know everything was to do nothing.

Thucydides on revolution

Frantic energy was the true quality of a man. A conspirator who wanted to be safe was a recreant in disguise. The lover of violence was always trusted, and his opponent suspected. He who succeeded in a plot was deemed knowing, but a still greater master in craft was he who detected one. On the other hand, he who plotted from the first to have nothing to do with plots was a breaker up of parties and a poltroon who was afraid of the enemy.

In a word, he who could outstrip another in a bad action was applauded, and so was he who encouraged to evil one who had no idea of it.

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[3] Jowett, *Thucydides.*

Thucydides goes on to show in detail how the whole morale of society was rotting at the roots while the springs of man's humanity were become dried and dead. It is a terrible arraignment, yet not more terrible than that in which Tacitus arraigns the Imperial Civilization of Rome:

The grandeur that was Rome

> . . . . Things sacred defiled, outrageous adulteries; the sea crowded with exiles, the isles polluted with blood. In the City yet blacker savagery: nobility, wealth, the avoidance, the acceptance of office,—all was crime, and virtue the most certain downfall. Not less detestable than their deeds were the rewards of the informers, of whom some secured a priesthood or a consulate for their spoil, while others became procurators or imperial advisers,—till hatred and fear were everywhere. The very slaves were turned against their masters, freedmen against their patrons, and whoso lacked a foe was ruined by his friends!

Historiæ I, ii

We may pass the Ages customarily called "Dark," though our Civilization is not without its debt to them. But the Italian Renaissance: "the emancipation of reason for the modern world," Symonds calls it. The emancipation of reason,—yet, if so, again at a price. Perhaps Dante's *Inferno* and Machiavelli's *Prince* state the price as well as it can be stated. We can pick it up, coin by coin, throughout the course of Renaissance history. Giovanni Bentivoglio pounded to death in a wine-vat by the populace. . . . The Canetoli inviting the Bentivogli to a christening feast, and there murdering them. . . . The Canetoli, in turn, hunted down and their smoking hearts nailed to the Bentivoglio palace. . . . These are incidents in the history of one Italian house in the one small city of Bologna. When we add the deeds of the Visconti, the Sforzeschi, the Malatesti, and a hundred and one other princely houses, above all the most famously infa-

Renaissance Italy

mous Borgias, then we begin to appreciate the *political* cost of the culture of Italy.

And this political cost is only the outward and upper reflection of what lay beneath the surface. Symonds says:

Italian despots

> Isolated, crime-haunted, and remorseless, at the same time fierce and timorous, the despot not infrequently made of vice a fine art for his amusement, and openly defied humanity. . . . . Inordinate lust and refined cruelty sated his irritable and jaded appetites. He destroyed pity in his soul, and fed his dogs with living men. . . .
>
> Loyalty was a virtue but little esteemed in Italy; engagements seemed made to be broken; even the crime of violence was aggravated by the game of perfidy, a bravo's stiletto or slow poison being reckoned among the legitimate means for ridding men of rivals or for revenging a slight.

Looking back over the course of human history we see half the action given over to needless or wanton infliction of suffering. "History is a bath of blood," says William James; and Pericles, in the speech I have cited, gives a kind of philosophy of history's diabolism: "To be hateful and offensive has ever been at the time the fate of those who have aspired to empire." Human power and human progress are not humane.

We are nowadays inclined to view all this with a retrospective sigh—bad, no doubt, in its day, but *we* have outgrown the evil. But is it true that we have outgrown it? Is it true that the cost of Civilization is not yet to pay? When we consider the toilsome hours, the dark confinements, the loathsome diseases, the stunted and warped physical and mental growth which Society inflicts on the tithe of its members even in times of peace, we cannot, it seems to me, say that the price of progress has as yet been greatly abated. And even if we hold that there be some

Cost of civilization

abatement in the Earth's brighter regions, this does not alter the fact of our terrible past: the fact that Humanity is what it is *because* it has done what it has done—because of its sinners as well as its saints, its ecstasies of cruelty as well as its ecstasies of devotion. Nor can we ever escape from the sufferings which we have inflicted; they bear with them their own perpetuity: in the laws of social organization, mal-adjusted; in the laws of individual heredity, repeatedly awakening inner and forgotten ills; above all, in the fact of an organism generation by generation more subtly sensitive to torment. The intensifying pangs of childbirth promise eventually to destroy the human race—if first man perish not of the madness of his Civilization.

The future

V

An historical survey of the Human Achievement must, it seems to me, in our honester moods end in a shudder and a darkening of the eyes. Full of senselessness, full of wantonness, full of loud and rapacious cruelty, are the records of Man's Deed.

Man's Deed

> Tomorrow, and tomorrow, and tomorrow,
> Creeps in this petty pace from day to day,
> To the last syllable of recorded time;
> And all our yesterdays have lighted fools
> The way to dusty death.

Life, our vaunted human life, in the large seems but

> a tale
> Told by an idiot, full of sound and fury,
> Signifying nothing.

And with Macbeth we "'gin to be aweary of the sun."

It is not strange that individuals and peoples who have seen and felt such suffering as man can inflict upon man should have arrived at the conclusion, from time to time, that man it is who is the root and spring of all the wickedness in Creation. This is the point of the Hebrew tale of the fruit of the Forbidden Tree, which opened man's eyes to good and evil and made him capable of the devilish. Corruption there entered in, blighting humanity once for all. And the long tale of human affliction has since been the tale of the Divine castigation which alone can purify the world of its taint.

Human diabolism

"The impulsive cause," says Burton, in the gracious exordium of his monstrous *Anatomy*,—"the impulsive cause of these miseries in Man, this privation of destruction of God's image, the cause of death and diseases, of all temporal and eternal punishments, was the sin of our first parent, Adam, in eating of the forbidden fruit, by the devil's instigation and allurement. His disobedience, pride, ambition, intemperance, incredulity, curiosity; from whence proceeded original sin, and that general corruption of mankind, as from a fountain flowed all bad inclinations and actual transgressions which cause our several calamities inflicted upon us for our sins."

Burton on the original sin

This is the view which we, as Christians, have inherited from the Old Dispensation; and the doctors of the church have expended vast ingenuity in their efforts to render it in terms mentally comfortable. It is not, however, exclusively a Christian view. One of the first of the Stoics, Cleanthes, ascribes to Zeus the authorship of all that is, on land, in sea, or in the heavens above, "save only the deeds of the

Cleanthes

wicked in their folly,"—save only the deeds of men.

Christian and Stoic alike find a preponderance of sin and suffering in human history, and Christian and Stoic alike turn from the contemplation of humanity to the larger contemplation of an all-inclusive Creation whose general plan is unharmed by the bitings and bickerings of petty mortal lives. Undoubtedly in many of our moods there is a healing potency in this return to Nature, even if it involve ascetic denials: for the Christian, of the physical and intellectual appetites; for the Stoic, of the emotional propensions. We, too, have our moments when we look longingly to the quiet and dignity of that part of our world which is unaffected by the obtrusions of what we call intelligent mind. The noisy incoherencies and egotisms of days beset by a jangling industrialism—factory whistles, tram-cars, electric placards, Coney Islands; the clicking and sputtering and thumping of machines; the bustling of human bodies; the blatancy of newspapers; the gush of sentimental paranoiacs and the eye-rolling frenzies of those protagonists of 'soul' whose heroics is all designed to 'tear a passion to tatters,'—from all this we, too, in our moments of weariness, turn for relief to the freshness and breadth of unsullied Nature. And there, in the ineffable solitudes of the sun-glorious desert, with its mile on mile of Cyclopean walls, yellows and crimsons and purples and whites rising in fantastic pinnacles to the azure sky, we find the works of puny men dwarfed and forgotten; or again, beneath the still and distant beauty of the stars, we know anew that depth and tenderness of night which the glittering town has banished afar forever. And so we are healed of the corrupting

Christian and Stoic

Nature's katharsis

taint and purged of humanity's inhumanity by the great katharsis of Nature.

VI

The return to Nature

In certain of our moods the return to Nature is unequivocally a healing. The fretful and stuffy perturbations of mortal affairs yield to its expansive suavity. It shames us of our tight shoes and starched collars and we discover a benign exhilaration in naked contact even with its harsher realities. And yet,—

What is the simple truth? Is our reason satisfied because our temper is changed? Nay, is our *life* satisfied? Are we—*can* we be content to surrender our normal activities and intelligence in this lackadaisical fashion? A man is neither a hermit crab nor an eagle to bask apart or soar aloof; human nature is primarily human, and business is business.

When we stand square-toed and face Nature, alert and fair, we must acknowledge, I think, that there is a deal of sham in our notion of her intrinsic beneficence. The Human Deed, as history shows it, looks black enough; but surely not it alone is the full account of the foulness we find in life. We have been too concerned to find excuse for the Creator, too ready to accept all the blame ourselves, for a state of affairs that is not pretty. Man has been devilish enough, God knows, but the Serpent was before him in Paradise.

Nature's cruelties

There are times when Nature delights in the contrivance of the most exquisite engines of torture. Such, for example, are those terrible Frankenstein's-man parodies of the human body in which mortal souls are encased for life. There once dwelt

in my neighborhood two human beings whose countenances were unendurable, both young men. One I never saw on the street save in early morning or at twilight; during the day he remained secluded. I judged that it had been some frightful accident that had given him a countenance distorted beyond human kinship. The other was often on the street, and he bore a mask unillumined by the light of reason, and I have seen him smile monstrously. Neither of these men could be viewed without recoil and neither of these men could live without rebellious agony.

Human monsters

What are we to say of the human monstrosities, idiots, degenerates, weaklings? What of inherited diseases, inherited perversions of our proper nature? What of premature senilities? Of madnesses, decays, rottings of minds and bodies in yet living beings? The Hydra-poison of distorted sensibilities? Nay, disease itself, cancer, smallpox, leprosy, plague? Has Nature no account in all this? Beneficent Nature! Healing Nature!

Disease and madness

Is it, after all, man's fault—he who is so terribly tortured from without,—is it all his fault that there is diabolism in the world? Nay rather, are not his blackest practices half excused by his too natural conviction that the Devil at the heart of things must somehow be placated by the affliction of humankind? that the evil core of the world must be propitiated by man-offering and child-offering? that humanity's ease is tolerable to God only so long as he gluts his gaze upon the Vicarious Sufferer?

Propitiation

In the spring of 1906 the following dispatch appeared in the news columns of the *New York Times:*

ST. PETERSBURG, March 30.—Horrible accounts are reaching St. Petersburg of cannibalism and starvation among tribes inhabiting the frozen arctic plain of the Chukchi Peninsula, at the extremity of Asia.

The grim choice

Most of the reindeer died from starvation in the winter of 1904-5 leaving the inhabitants without means of communication or food. During the past winter whole tribes have died, and members of the Omolon and Oloiya tribes, when facing starvation, assembled in council and decided that nothing remained but death. They agreed that each head of a family should kill his wife and children and then commit suicide.

The tribesmen gathered on a plateau covered with snow and ice, and in the darkness of the Arctic winter the Spartan decision was executed, not a single member of either tribe surviving.

More terrible still is the story of what occurred in a family of the Yukahir tribe. A mother and nine of her children having died of hunger, the father, a surviving daughter, and a nephew, lived upon the remains, and when they were consumed the father murdered the nephew.

A Russian named Dolganoff, who went to the region to buy furs, reported the situation to the authorities at Yakutsk. He entered the hut of a Yukahir family while the latter were eating the head of a murdered relative.

Here we have a twofold example—Human Nature and Nature. On the one hand, the courage of men who (savages though they were), under the scourge of famine, could yet die men. On the other, the fearful spectacle of human beings, under this same scourge, driven to abandon their proper humanity and sink to the depths of bestiality. We can admire the one group and pity the other,—but blame, if there be blame, lies not at the door of the human sufferers, but with that Nature which has brought her children to such unnatural straits.

Sodom and Gomorrah

And the Lord said: "Because the cry of Sodom and Gomorrah is great, and because their sin is grievous, I will go down now, and see whether they have done altogether according to the cry of it, which is come unto me."

Then the Lord rained upon Sodom and upon Gomorrah brimstone and fire from the Lord out of heaven; and he overthrew those cities, and all the plain, and all the inhabitants of the cities, and that which grew upon the ground.

Sodom and Gomorrah, Pompeii, Martinique, and the towns of the forests of the Northwest,—is it brimstone and fire from the Lord "because their sin is grievous"? Or do such wholesale and meaningless slaughters prove, as the man in Kansas believes, that in all Nature mankind is bereft of friendship, and the good and potent God is but a myth? Nowadays we are more loath than were our fathers to cry out upon the iniquity of men because they are found to suffer.

Fire, Flood, Famine, Plague, War

Fire, Flood, Famine, Plague, War—these are the cataclysms that sweep away tribes and cities and nations, and of these only the last can be laid to the authorship of man. Our race is precariously ventured amid such perils and furies that we seem to be rather the toy of some Cosmic Beast than the children of a kindly Providence. Why, only today, in China there is Famine and Plague—parents selling their children, men dying like rats in their holes of the ulcerous pest, throughout the land the odor of burning bodies whereof the smoke ascends hourly to Heaven,—so that, could we see it, in the presence of such awful visitation all prejudice of white and yellow would be forgotten and there would remain with us only the consciousness of our common humanity embarked in a fearful and pitiful struggle with a too cruel and conquering outer Nature.

In matters such as these, distinctions of race and nation and time disappear. We are in the presence of an elemental Fact ever terribly pertinent to our

mortal estate, and we come, it seems to me, as near to achieving that transmutation of the temporal into the timeless, which the Absolutist Philosophers give us as the mark of their Absolute God, as it is likely to be given us to come. Certainly, no man can read the verses with which Lucretius finds it fitting to close his analysis of "the Nature of Things" without surrendering all account of time and distance to the present sense of intolerable disaster, timelessly empoisoning the substance of the world:

"The Nature of Things"

Book VI, 1144f

Then troop on troop to disease and death they fell:
First with the head consumed in fiery heats,
Suffusing flame the two eyes ruddying;
Whilst the blackened throat did sweat and ulcers choked
The pathway of the voice, and the thick tongue—
That erst did utter forth the very soul—
Oozed heavily with blood and clogged with pain;
From throat to breast, and thence into the heart—
The heartsick heart itself,—till the strong disease
The utmost holds of life had broken down,
And the fetid breath did issue from the mouth
Like odors of decay from men not dead;
And strength of mind with strength of body failed,
Anguish of soul companioning with pains
Unbearable, till all the air did groan
With sobs and lamentations, and men sank
Like suppliants at the portal of the tomb. . .

The Plague at Athens

And bone and member burning with disease,
Some to chill streams their naked bodies gave;
While into deep wells still others headlong plunged,
Seeking, with mouth agape, the cooling spring,—
Yet such their thirst, the heavy drafts they took,
Bodies immersed, were futile as salt tears,
As tiny hard-wrung tears, to slake desire;
And so they lay, uneaséd and undone;
Nor heard the spells low-muttered in dumb fear
O'er sufferers who turned their pleading eyes,
Glamored with pain and reft of soothing sleep,
Where over all Death bore his lordly sign. . .

Amid these ills was one ill big with woe,
With piteous woe, how each, who himself beheld
Tangled with weedy death, like one condemned
Gave over hope of life and grieving lay
At watch for spectral Fate, that he might send
His spirit forth in greeting. And in sooth,
Time never was the avid plague did cease
To raven on men as men were woolly flocks
Or hornéd kine: so murder multiplied.
For those, death-fearful, who in lust of life
Fled from their sick, 'twas but a little time
Ere answering vengeance came and gave them up,
Emptied of aid, to harsh and shameful doom.
Whereas for those who lingered near, of toil
And dread contagion they did die, all they
Whom shame compelled to hear the mingled voice
Of plaintive supplication and long woe:
Till all men noble thus their Lethe found. . .

Optimo hoc leti genus

Nor burial remained—that sepulture
Hallowéd in the city from of old:
For panic was on all, and each hurt man
Entombed his sacred dead as best he could,—
Though more there were more horribly persuaded,
Who clamoring, upon another's pyre
Heaped high the dismal dead, set to the torch,
And oft with noisy brawl and oft with blood
They wrangled round the corpses of their kin.

VII

Lucretius' description of the plague at Athens is taken almost phrase for phrase from Thucydides' more coldly dreadful narrative of the event. "As to its probable origin or the causes which might or could have produced such a disturbance of nature," remarks Thucydides, "every man, whether a physician or not, will give his own opinion."

Thucydides, II. xlvii-liii

Every man will have his own opinion. We know what would have been the opinion of Eliphaz the

Job's comforters

Temanite, and Bildad the Shuhite, and Zophar the Naamathite:

> Who ever perished being innocent? or where were the righteous cut off? . .
>
> Behold God will not cast away a perfect man, neither will he help the evil doers. . .
>
> What is man, that he should be clean? and he which is born of a woman, that he should be righteous? . . .
>
> His bones are full of the sin of his youth, which shall lie down with him in the dust.

We know this opinion, for it has been the essential task of Christian theology to make of it a reasonable opinion. All the pitiful subtlety of Christian logicians, from Origen to Jonathan Edwards, has been spent to show that God's Will is throughout just and beneficent, and that human suffering and sin is the inevitable outcome of the creation of a human will in the image of the Divine! We know this opinion, and the degradations of sensibility and intelligence to which it has reduced human minds: "Babes, Thieves, Heathen, and Heretics" is the title of a poem published by Wigglesorth of Boston in 1700, celebrating the hell God wills for the unbaptized and the unclean, for little children, the ignorant, and the outcast.[4]

Wigglesorth of Boston

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[4] Burton's *Anatomy* (Partition III, Section 4, Member II) contains some pages of really terrible reading; veiled though they be in grotesque erudition, these pages none the less reveal the bared teeth of fanaticism and the raw wounds of despair. Subsection 1, of this Member, concerns: "Religious Melancholy in Defect; Parties affected, Epicures, Atheists, Hypocrites, worldly secure, Carnalists, all impious Persons, impenitent Sinners, etc." "That grand sin of atheism or impiety . . . . *monstrosam melancholiam*" appears to be the most heinous of the offenses. " 'It cannot stand with God's goodness, protection, and providence (as Saint Chrysostom in the Dialect of such discontented persons) to see and suffer one man to be lame, another mad, a third poor and miserable all the days of his life, a fourth grievously tormented with sickness and aches, to his last hour. Are these signs and works of God's providence, to let one man be deaf, another dumb? A poor honest fellow lives in disgrace, woe and want, wretched he is; when as a wicked caitiff abounds in superfluity of wealth, keeps whores, parasites, and what he will himself': *Audis, Jupiter, haec?. Talia multa connectentes, longum reprehensionis sermonem erga Dei providentiam contexunt.* Thus they mutter and object (see the rest of their arguments

We know this opinion well; and we are only less familiar with that of Elihu the son of Barachel:

Behold God is great, and we know him not, neither can the number of his years be searched out. . . . . With God is terrible majesty! With God is terrible majesty

Jehovah himself is not unmindful of the advantages of Elihu's point of view; for it is this which he assumes in reproving his servant Job (preliminary, to be sure, to making things right with Job):

Where wast thou when I laid the foundations of the earth? declare, if thou hast understanding.

Who hath laid the measures thereof, if thou knowest? or who hath stretched the line upon it?

Whereupon are the foundations thereof fastened? or who laid the cornerstone thereof:

When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy? . . .

Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high?

She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place.

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in Mersennus in Genesin, and in Campanella, amply confuted), with many such vain cavils, well known, not worthy the recapitulation or answering; whatsoever they pretend, they are *interim* of little or no religion."

It is an easy confutation! and of a kind which theologians have begun to find ineffectual,—though in Burton's day there were, of course, other persuasions than reason. "*Instar omnium*, the most copious confuter of atheists," says Burton, "is Marinus Mersennus in his Commentaries on Genesis; with Campanella's *Atheismus Triumphatus*. He sets down at large the causes of this brutish passion (seventeen in number I take it), answers all their arguments and sophisms, which he reduceth to twenty-six heads, proving withal his own assertion: 'There is a God, such a God, the true and sole God,' by thirty-five reasons. His Colophon is how to resist and repress atheism and to that purpose he adds four especial means or ways, which whoso will may profitably peruse."

An interesting side-light upon the genial personality of this Marinus Mersennus, and incidentally a notion of some of the atheistical "arguments and sophisms," appears in another "Subsection": "Mersennus, says our author, "makes mention of a desperate friend of his, whom, amongst others, he came to visit and exhort to patience, that broke out into most blasphemous atheistical speeches, too fearful to relate, when they wished him to trust in God, *Quis est ille Deus (inquit) ut serviam illi, quid proderit si oraverim; si praesens est, cur non succurrit? cur non me carcare, inedia, squalore confectum liberat? quid ego feci? &c., absit a me hujusmodi Deus.* Another of his acquaintance broke out into like atheistical blasphemies, upon his wife's death raved, cursed, said and did he cared not what. And so for the most part it is with them all. . . . ." We can imagine what sort of a Job's comforter this Mersennus was! Rather than accompany such Christian reasoners to their salvation most of us would choose, I imagine, the company of those "impenitent sinners that go to hell in a lethargy," as Burton puts it.

From thence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off.

Her young ones also suck up blood: and where the slain are, there is she. . . .

Shall he that contendeth with the Almighty instruct him? he that reproveth God, let him answer it.

Moslem fatalism

The whole Mohammedan world has adopted the attitude of Elihu. "God wills it," is the answer to every affliction and the excuse for every atrocity. Human reason abnegates its proper function; and with reason departs humanity. Job was never more bereft of comfort than is Moslem theology of gentleness and nobility.

Fatalism in the East, Diabolism in the West,—to such pass are we brought when the theologian reasons with suffering! In order to maintain the purity of God, the virtue of man is denied; and only a merciful grace from above can effect his salvation. The physicians, says Thucydides, were among the first victims of the plague; and those who nursed the sick, "especially those who aspired to heroism," all died.

Optimus hoc leti genus ergo quisque subibat,—

Lucretius puts it: 'the nobler men suffered this manner of death.' Job's comforters and Christian theologists would have seen no noble men; and the Oriental would not have cared.

VIII

The mood of devotion

There is a certain ideal of the religious mind, essentially a mood of devotion rather than a theological insight, with which I have profound sympathy. This is the ideal of the spirit at peace: unquestioning and unwavering trust in a Power benignly removed

from human pain and puzzle, yet solicitously provident of men's destinies and tenderly compassionate of the least of mortal ills,—faith in an All-Wise Father, whose hurt is but a kindly cure, who chasteneth whom he loveth, whose mercy endureth forever,—faith in a Father's Wisdom,—faith, and the soul at peace.

Faith and the soul at peace

The charm in this ideal can hardly fail to appeal to any man long beset with the futility of human reasonings or over-wearied with the tale of human blind endeavors. It is an ideal which has very much in common with that of "return to Nature"; there is the same relinquishment of the distinctively human interests, the same turning from participation in affairs to restful contemplation of that which needs nor change nor emendation, the same sense of being caught up into the luminous tranquillity of unsullied heavens. What is peculiar to the religious view is the sympathetic friendliness which it gives to Nature, the Fatherliness of the God for whom Nature is but the outer expression and the cloak: not the veiled face of the Almighty, but the veiled face of the All-Compassionate.

Before it was Christian this ideal was Hebrew, and Greek as well as Hebrew. It was not Hellenic in the sense in which the great thought of Plato and Aristotle was Hellenic; but it entered early into Greek conception and gathered in intensity as men's hopes found less and less to support them in this world, and turned more and more to the regard of a world withdrawn. In the very morning of Greek philosophy, mid the flux and inconstancy of sense, Heraclitus found one thing whereto the understanding man could strongly cleave, one thing fixed and

Morning of Greek philosophy

constant—the living law of Nature: "for sustaining all human laws is one, the Law Divine, which prevaileth where it will, and sufficeth for all, and surpasseth all." "The many live as if they possessed a wisdom peculiarly their own"; and "they deem some things just and some unjust, but to God all things are beautiful and good and just."

Heraclitus

With trust in a providential law Heraclitus thus combines an intellectual, moral and æsthetic perception of Nature's inward harmony. These two moods of thought—Providence and Harmony—are the prime indices to that whole Stoic aloofness from the world in which the nobler minds of antiquity sought seclusion, as generation by generation men sank into sorrier ways. The idea of an ultimate point of view reconciling the inconsistencies and conflicts of our partial experience of life in one all-conquering Harmony is a Greek and intellectualist addition to the abnegate faith which we find in the Hebrew Oriental, serving to define the object of this faith; and it is from the Greek rather than from the Hebrew that we derive the Christian notion of the inclusive wisdom of Providence. Stoic and Hebrew alike emphasize man's ignorance and need for trust, but the Hebrew rests his faith in an ultimate Power, the Greek in an eventual Insight into cosmic order.

Cleanthes

> Thou knowest to make straight the crooked ways,
> And what to us is Chaos, unto Thee
> Is Order, and lovely all unloveliness. . .

Thus sings Cleanthes (boxer turned Stoic), voicing the Stoic conviction of the final reasonableness and beauty of Nature, which could make of Nature's harmony a worthy object of human trust. We have carried the idea over into our own view,—but could

this alone give quietistic peace? Nay, there is another element, fundamental alike with Hebrew and Stoic and Christian: the utter trust itself,—

Lead me, O Zeus, lead thou me on!
By ways soe'er Thy wisdom hath ordained,
Lead me, O Zeus!
I will not fail; or if by weakness stained,
My faltering will by Thy Will be constrained!
Lead me, O Zeus![5]

Prayer to Zeus

Is not the devotion of the reformed boxer, despite the difference of centuries and of creeds, the same beautiful faith which inspires that finest of our modern English hymns?

Lead, kindly Light, amid th' encircling gloom,
Lead thou me on!
The night is dark, and I am far from home;
Lead thou me on!
Keep thou my feet; I do not ask to see
The distant scene; one step enough for me.

Cardinal Newman

Is it not the same devotion, spoken again and again, by Pagan and by Christian, wherever man has felt at once the need and the presence of a controlling and consoling Power,—spoken again and again, though never, by merely mortal lips, more nobly than in the great words of the greatest of religious poets:

E la sua volontate è nostra pace. . .

"His Will is our Peace:
"It is that Sea whereunto all things move—
"All things that He creates, and Nature's all!"

Dante

IX

And yet,—can we stop here without the vision of India?

[5] Von Arnim, *Stoicorum Veterum Fragmenta*, fr. 527.

Brahma

"The shining drop slips into the shining sea. . .
The shining drop slips into the shining sea. . ."

I seem to see a thousand times a thousand yogins, sitting immutable in the scorching sun, muttering their ancient formulas: to their eyes the pageant of life is like a wavering mirage sprung from the heat and distances of the desert; and to their ears the timbrels of wild devotees and the plaintive wailing of children in famine alike sound distant and meaningless. Joy is illusion; pain is illusion; life is illusion. . . . 'The shining drop slips into the shining sea. . . .' And answering these are the disciples of Buddha, seeking eternal somnolence. 'Om mani padme hum. . . . Om mani padme hum. . . . 'O the Sacred Jewel in the Lotus. . . . O the Sacred Jewel in the Lotus. . . .' Om mani padme hum. . . .' Joy is illusion; pain is illusion; life is illusion. 'Om mani padme hum. . . .'

Buddha

Macbeth

Better be with the dead,
Whom we to gain our peace, have sent to peace,
Than on the torture of the mind to lie
In restless ecstacy. Duncan is in his grave;
After life's fitful fever he sleeps well;
Treason has done his worst: nor steel, nor poison,
Malice domestic, foreign levy, nothing
Can touch him further.

The ideal of peace, at the last, resolves into an idealization of the immutability of the tomb. First, the material man, appetite and desire, must be slaughtered; then, by slow surgeries, the sensibilities must be destroyed; the will must be effaced; and finally, intelligence itself must shrink to senile inactivity. This is the ascetic prescription, which denies a man's right to be a proper man. It is the cure of evil offered by all those, who, flinching the hardship of

thought, point the way of peace through self-surrender and self-mutilation. It is the insight of the philosophers of the Universal and the Absolute, who know no better bliss than oblivescence of humanity. "Go ye," they say, "to the dead for counsel! Go ye to the canny dead, and they will give, with shrewd low-lidded eyes, effectual counsel!"

Philosophers of the Absolute

I remember a story of Aguinaldo's men: how they captured a Spanish officer whom they had come to hate; and they amputated his feet, and they cut off his hands, and they tore out his tongue, and they blinded his eyes,—carefully, surgically, they did these things,—and then they returned his still breathing and pulsating body to his Spanish comrades—encased in a coffin, they returned it. And this is what the idealists demand of us; that we amputate desire, that we blind sense, and obliterate personality, that our spiritual carcase may find peace in the Absolute!

Filipino vengeance

I know that there have been brave attempts to find man's best humanity even in its deprivation,—none better nor braver than that of Josiah Royce. "Your sufferings are God's sufferings," he says; "I hold that God willingly, freely, and consciously suffers in us when we suffer, and that our grief is his." God suffers, too, and necessarily,—that is our consolation. But is God's suffering *like* our suffering? No, indeed!

Royce on spiritual courage

> What you mean when you say that evil in this temporal world ought not to exist, and ought to be suppressed, is simply what God means by seeing that evil ought to be and is endlessly thwarted, endured, but subordinated. In the natural world you are the minister of God's triumph. Your deed is his. You can never clean the world of evil; but you can subordinate evil. The justification of the presence in the world

of the morally evil becomes apparent to us mortals only in so far as this evil is overcome and condemned. It exists only that it may be cast down. Courage, then, for God works in you. In the order of time you embody in outer acts what is for him the truth of his eternity.

Salvation through the Universal

This, in its most modern form, is the last word of Greek intellect. Salvation through the Universal! Plato, Plotinus, Erigena, Spinoza, Hegel: we call its long historic roll, and at the first and at the last the idea is the same. Gain ye but God's perspective, but see the world as the eternal and timeless sees it, and all its imperfection is medicined away. Be ye gods, and ye are saved!

It is a brave attempt, and perhaps it will give strength to the strong: what to you seem conquering ills, to God are but evils thwarted—out of space, out of time. But can the logic of the superhuman answer the argument of the human drama? What, think you, would have been the opinion of those starving Chukchis of the frozen tundras as they marched forth in the Arctic night to their tribal suicide? Would *they* have seen evil eternally thwarted, eternally overcome, themselves the ministers of God's triumph? An African explorer tells how he found the remnants of a once powerful nation inhabiting a miasmic swamp, their last refuge from cannibal enemies; they lived in mud hovels; their sustenance was vermin and the roots they grubbed from the mud; the arts in which once they excelled were lost; intelligence was dead in them; and every man, woman and child in the tribe was blotched with a fungous leprosy. Are men such as these the outer embodiment of the truth of God's eternity?

God's eternity

There have been times in the history of mankind, —times we should not forget, for it may be that

their like is to come again,—when sects and peoples have seen in the world an arena for the display of the masterfulness of the Devil rather than a throne for the majesty of God. The Ophites consecrated their devotions to the Wisdom of the Serpent, and earned the title of devil-worshipers: but who shall say that in their day they were not justified? Parkman somewhere tells of the finding of a broken tribe of Florida Indians: they had been missionized by Spanish Jesuits; and afterwards their women and their children and their strong young men had been carried off by Spanish overlords to slavery in the Indies; and when they were found again, those who escaped, they had slain the priests and were worshiping with fervent devotion that Satan whom, they said, the God of the Spaniards hated.

Devil-worship

Today we are a triumphant people; ours is a triumphant civilization; we are strong in our grip on Nature, and we look forward with lustful eyes to illimitable conquests. In the exaltation of our sense of progress, it is easy for us to see evil overcome and condemned, to believe that it exists only to be cast down, only to make trial of our superb strength and glorify our prowess by example. This is easy for us of today; but may we not fairly ask, can it be so forever?

I remember once opening an intolerable book—a German book it was,—giving faithful and unimaginative details of the great natural fact of degeneracy. There were colored plates representing transitional forms between the animal and the vegetable, and plates portraying decaying animal forms, as it were, reassuming vegetal characteristics. And there were representations and descriptions of man-

Degeneracy

born creatures which were animal monstrosities and vegetable monstrosities. I closed that book hurriedly; but I cannot forget it. For it foretold an inevitable time—millions of years hence, perhaps,—when the light of reason must fade from the human eye, the erect figure stoop and slink, and the great utterance of the human voice—*animi interpres*—give way to senile mouthings. It foretold this time, inevitable to the mortal denizens of a mortal Planet, save it be, ere the hour approach, our children's children shall march forth upon the chilling deserts, and there, in the twilight of the dying sun, like the Chukchis of the Arctic, fathers shall slay their children, husbands their wives, and the men die men.

Earth must die

We know our Schopenhauer. The Will to Live is a blind and striving will, through the ages winning its laborious way to a dearly bought intelligence. And when it attains this, when at the last in the light of reason it beholds its own realized intention; then it perceives the appalling diabolism of Nature—how its own desires are created to become a mockery of themselves and its every ideal foredoomed to hollowness and defeat. Reason is the nightmare of Reality, and the Will to Live, having given birth to reason, becomes transmuted into a Will to Die.

Schopenhauer

The ideal of peace is a beautiful and consoling ideal; and the mood of trust in an all-puissant and all-fatherly God is a sweet and comforting mood. But there are times when we feel the sting of life, and the strivings of life, and the humanness of life too keenly to maintain this ideal or to endure this mood. And in the bitterness of our sense of our own humanity, we cry out against those who come to us saying, 'Peace, peace,' where there is no peace.

Homo sum

Homo sum! I am a man; let the World deal with me as a man, and I will return unto it a Man's measure!

X

Bloodless sanity

But there is another version of the ideal of peace. It finds its realization not in the consolations of faith but in the imperturbableness of the contemplative mind. It exalts reason over revelation, and finds in reason a special type of resignation. It is materialistic rather than spiritualistic, æsthetic rather than moral. It reduces desire to curiosity, energy to patience, and it finds the quintessence of our nature in a kind of glorified and bloodless sanity. Science is its inspiration and science its end, and its feeble enthusiasms expend themselves in analytical rearrangements of the items of knowledge. At its strongest, it develops a vague devotion to Truth (felt to be rather the better for being unattainable); while at its weakest, it is spent in dilettante interjections over the cosmic bric-a-brac.

The Life of Reason

Materialism (writes Santayana) has its distinct aesthetic and emotional colour, though this may be strangely affected and even reversed by contrast with systems of an incongruous hue, jostling it accidentally in a confused and amphibious mind. If you are in the habit of believing in special providences, or of expecting to continue your romantic adventures in a second life, materialism will dash your hopes most unpleasantly, and you may think for a year or two that you have nothing left to live for. But a thorough materialist, one born to the faith and not half plunged into it by an unexpected christening in cold water, will be like the superb Democritus, a laughing philosopher. His delight in a mechanism that can fall into so many marvellous and beautiful shapes, and can generate so many exciting passions, should be of the same intellectual quality as that which the visitor feels in a museum of natural history, where he views the myriad butterflies in their cases, the flamingoes and shell-fish, the mammoths and gorillas. Doubt-

less there were pangs in that incalculable life, but they were soon over; and how splendid meantime was the pageant, how infinitely interesting the universal interplay, and how foolish and inevitable those absolute little passions.

The new Democritus

This is the new ideal—the ideal of the intellectual, the æsthete. He would wander (safe as well as sane) down the polished corridors of a polished life, and study the displays. He would enjoy the burnished iridescences of the winged butterflies, and would speculate, smiling curiously to himself, the tremor of their frail tropical pinions in the sudden net. Smiling, he would see in his mind's eye the odd movements of the bright flamingo; and smiling, he would harken with an inward ear the agonized trumpetings of the embogged mammoth. "Those absolute little passions," he would muse; and with a faint thrill he would turn, still smiling, to felicitate the genial chance that had made him other than the black gorilla. He would be "like the superb Democritus, a laughing philosopher"; for "against the verbiage by which man persuades himself that he is the goal and acme of the universe, laughter is the proper defence."

Lessing on stony laughter

Lessing remarks that La Mettrie, who had had himself painted and carved as a second Democritus, is seen as laughing only the first time; seen often, in place of the laughing philosopher appears the grinning fool. It is all well enough to tell us that "laughter need not remain without an overtone of sympathy"; but the music of life is not so composed; rather, it is built upon life's fundamentals; and mere dissonance is mere noise. No doubt there is great amusement to be had from the caperings of the scourged clown; no doubt there is a fine compla-

cency in feeling one's self initiate into the cosmic jest; but it is only Mephistopheles who is seen always smiling.

In the presence of rident materialism I can but agree with Sir Thomas Browne: "Democritus, that thought to laugh the times into goodness, seems to me as deeply hypochondriack as Heraclitus, that bewailed them." You cannot laugh evil into goodness any more than you can obliterate it by self-surrender; and surely a sardonic wisdom is no nobler than a foolish faith.

The Laughing and the Weeping Philosophers

To be sure, there is another way of viewing the matter—Montaigne's way:

> Alter
> Ridebat, quoties a limine moverat unum
> Protuleratque pedem; flebat contrarius alter.

"I like better the first humor," says Montaigne; "not because it is more agreeable to laugh than to weep, but because it is more disdainful, and condemns us more than the other; and it seems to me that we can never be so scorned as we merit. Pity and commiseration are mingled with some esteem for the thing that is pitied; things which one mocks are things of no value. I do not think that there is so much ill in us as there is vanity, so much malice as stupidity: we are less filled with evil than with inanity; we are less wretched than we are vile."

Montaigne

But Montaigne's view is as theological as it is inhuman; materialism has no such theological excuse for inhumanity. If one's reason constrains one to materialism, let it at least be a dignified and sympathetic and human materialism,—

> Nothing extenuate
> Nor set down aught in malice,—

Othello

then shall we speak simply and nobly, as Lucretius spoke, viewing life's battles and shipwrecks from afar, but intimately viewing them, too, in the keenness of mortal commiseration. . .

Book II. 323f

> Yea, as when mighty legions fill the plain
> With course and charge and image of bright war
> Whose sheen strikes heaven, while all the earth around
> Glitters with brass and shakes with the tramp of men;
> And the smitten hills up to the very stars
> Echo their shoutings, and the spacious fields
> Quake with the sudden onset of the horse:
> E'en so, there is a station mid the hills,
> High over all, wherefrom the turmoil seems
> But as a silver glamour o'er the plain.

XI

Recapitulation

I have reached in my discussion a perspective that permits recapitulation.

We set out with the broad incongruity of the theory of a competent Providence and the fact of material disaster. We acknowledged the naturalness of the inference from this incongruity that (in the words of the Kansas man) "gods and souls do not exist." We owned also—what the Kansan and the Epicurean alike had thought out—the dark deeds to which superstition has given rise; and we asked whether, in view of the terrible cost in human suffering of what we call human progress, there might not be some justification for the long-seated notion that man is essentially evil, and that it is the taint of his evil will which has given rise to all the ills that assail the world. Christian and Stoic alike, we found, maintained this view in dark moments of human history, and alike urged for its cure refuge in that wider and more inclusive Nature of which man's is only a minor incident. Yet when we came

Acts of Providence

more closely to examine this wider Nature, we did not find therein an unsullied and undimmed Elysium; on the contrary, we found that it, as well as man's nature, displays a brutality that is nothing short of manifest diabolism. We declined, therefore, to follow that theology of Job's comforters which shifts the responsibility for evil entirely to man's shoulders; and we declined also to surrender our human right to reason in favor of an incomprehensibly just and beneficent Providence, a view which is equally complacent of Mohammedan fatalism and Calvinistic election and damnation.

Nature no Elysium

We then proceeded to consider the reasonings which have endeavored to explain our perception of ill as an illusion of perspective, and which have sought the cure of this illusion in the peace of mind that comes from faith in an eventual revelation of righteousness in all that now seems to us unrighteous, or again comes from hope of an eventual absorption amounting to annihilation,—respectively, the Christian and Buddhist salvations. But in the ideal of peace we found no lasting peace, nor aught save an ascetic mutilation of our proper humanity; and when we turned from this to the Epicurean ideal of an æsthetically intellectual contemplation of Nature, we found there only another and a more odious type of self-mutilation. Beauty seemed to us possible only when joined with a sympathetic understanding of suffering.

Christian and Buddhist Salvations

Thus we find: (1) In his primitive reaction to the fact of evil, man seeks to account for it on *moral* grounds: he explains all suffering as the outcome of his own immorality and sin, and he justifies it as being a divinely inflicted retribution for his corrup-

Explanations of evil: (1) Moral

(2) Confusion of moral and æsthetic

tion and wickedness. (2) In a more reflective consideration of the problem, he tries to explain away evil. It is, he says, only relatively a fact. It is the condition, in itself negative, without which could not be that goodness and beauty which make Creation in God's eye the very figure of perfection. This explanation confuses *moral* with *æsthetic* reasons. Evil as seen by man appears positive; salvation consists in faith that to God this positive evil is presented as overcome, hence as negative. Here we have the moral reason at work. Evil as seen by God is that element of antithesis which makes possible the display of the divine goodness; it is the stroke of composition which illumines the picture with perfection; it is negative, to be sure, but its negativity is that of the contrary, not that of the contradictory (as in the moral view). Here we have the æsthetic reason at work. The two types of reasoning are inconsistent; it is only their subtle shifts that keep us dazzled and deluded. (3) In a final sophistication, we have the problem resolved on wholly *æsthetic* grounds. Evil is but disease of perspective; suffering is not illusory, but interesting; the essential nature of sin is bad taste. All ills are reduced to fatigues of the attention; or, if there be anything that is positively wrong with nature, it is some damage to the interest of the spectacle; and this, at the worst, may be healed by a merry mood.

(3) Æsthetic

It is not easy to say which should be foremost in our contemplation of all this—wonder at the astuteness or at the helplessness of human reasonings. Certainly, after the words are spent the facts remain, as sickening and as stenchful as they were in the beginning. We have shifted our nomenclature

somewhat; but we have altered our experience not one iota. Pain and ugliness remain with us, no whit more genial than before. Of what use all these detours of dialectic if they but lead us again and again to drink at the same black trough?

XII

Humanism accepts evil as fact

Is it not time for a reconsideration of this whole problem of evil from the point of view of a frank and honest humanism, accepting the facts of life at their face values, as we live them? We will concede that to a being separated from our way of life by transcendental distances or by transcendental infinitudes these facts may appear to be other than they are to us,—transcendently better or transcendently worse, and one with as good logic as the other; but we must contend that such a valuation of the world can be no factor in our own. We will acknowledge, too, that a man may by proper surgery free himself from man's ordinary passions and sensibilities; but we must decline to accept such conduct as a philosophical solution. Rather, we will openly own that pain and ugliness, sin and suffering, are as elemental and inevitable as ever they appear to be; and with Plutarch we will say that "it is alike impossible for the bad to exist where God is the cause of all, or for the good to be where he is the cause of naught." Indeed, we may best take Plutarch's phrasing—unmarred by subtlety—for the plain statement of our platform:

De Ise et Osiride, xlv

The harmony of the world is likened by Heraclitus to a lyre or a bow, now taut, now relaxed. And Euripides,—

> Nor Paradise nor Hell lieth apart;
> But Good and Ill conjoinéd in the World
> Do nurture Beauty. . .

Euripides

Wherefore this most ancient opinion, derived from the givers of laws and the teachers of things sacred, albeit the authorship is unknown, hath been preserved in firm and indelible faith, not alone through discourse and tradition, but in the rites and mysteries of barbarian and Greek: Neither is the Universe born of chance, to be pendent upon fortune, destitute alike of mind, of reason and of governance; nor yet is there one reason which controlleth all, guiding as with a rudder or as with reins securely held. Nay, rather is all confused, and to the good is joined the bad, nor ever doth Nature bring forth aught unsullied: not that there is but one distributor who from two jars, like a keeper of liquors, mingleth and dispenseth human affairs; but that from two contrary sources and by two adverse powers, whereof the one leadeth to the right and straightforwardly, while the other turneth aside and directeth astray,—this very World (or if not the Universe, at least what lieth below the Moon) is made unequal and is impelled to various and manifold motions. But if naught can become without a cause, and if ill cannot be a cause of good, it followeth of necessity that in Nature there must be, as of good, so of evil, a source and a principle. And this is the opinion approved of many, and them the wisest.

The Sublunar World is a mixture

This opinion, "approved of many," shall be our opinion also. We shall insist that,—whatever may be the appearance of our affairs from celestial altitudes,—at least in that part of the Universe which "lieth below the Moon," and which is our intimate concern, the good and the bad are confusedly intermingled. And so saying, our purpose will be to ask after their bearing upon life.

XIII

First of all, we must clear the boards of a subtle and far-ramifying confusion.

Two types of absolute

In their efforts to escape the reality of evil, idealist and materialist, each in his own degree, fall into the like error. Each seeks salvation in an *absolute* experience,—an experience absolutely unsullied, absolutely perfected, absolutely secure. To be sure,

there is the widest possible divergence in the loci of their respective realizations: expansion into the Absolute Being of the infinite and eternal is the idealist's road to salvation; contraction into the absolute irrelevance of his own atomic self is the materialist's. Each finds a moment of perfected bliss; but this moment for the idealist is the timeless moment of all eternity, whereas for the materialist it is the altogether temporal and fleeting instancy of the present; perfection for the one is forever secure *sub specie æternitatis,* for the other *carpe diem* is the motto of life. Nevertheless, this divergence is only an incident of temperament: the logic of the two systems is identical. Each proceeds through excision of that flux of active relations which the materialist scorns and the Absolute idealist thwarts, transmutes and absorbs; each finds his goal in a passive and æsthetic contemplation; and each is ensconced forever in an Eleatic solitude.

Eternal, Atomic

That the security of each is a false security will appear, I think, on due reflection. It is an *idolum specus,* a fancy bred of the philosopher's closet; it is essentially a work of art, and, like other art, a fiction. The æsthetic terminus is proof of this: the whole world appears beautiful, and it appears beautiful wholly because ugliness is abstracted from it. Science and art are two great modes of universalizing life; but art is the more dangerous to our integrity from the fact that, although its nature is to neglect and reject certain phases of experience, none the less it yields us the illusion of fulfilled life; we are always conscious that science is schematic, but it is the very success of art to hide its elisions and conceal its schematisms.

Science and art

"The end," says Aristotle, speaking of the drama, "is the chief thing of all." And here we have the clue to the fallacy that underlies the dramatized philosophies. These philosophies demand of the world dramatic unity—"an action that is complete and whole and of a certain magnitude." Creation must manifest a plot, having its proper complication and solution; and the solution must be a terminus. The mind that insists upon absolute understanding must content itself forever with a retrospective mode; for looking forward to an end that is inevitable is but another phase of retrospection. The World is viewed as a finished deed before it is appraised, and its so-called justifications are only the cheers and hand-clappings of satisfied and sated spectators. We admire the spacious and multicolored stage, the gifted protagonists, the articulate plot,—and we pronounce the work of the Creator good.

A dramatized Universe

I confess that this procedure has an inconquerable charm. For one thing, it is the veritable essence of syllogistic thinking. If we are to use our minds at all we must develop ideas; and every developed idea, every abstraction, every *thing,* is a dramatization of some phase of our experience. Language is the most stupendous of our art works, and every noun and verb is the title of a picture. When we rearrange these pictures into gracious series, we classify, as science classifies, we philosophize, we poetize, we pronounce those judgments on life which seem to us the heart of reality as well as of literature. And we forget that the neat boundaries we are setting are only the boundaries of our own imaginations.

Words are titles

We forget that (as Aristotle says) 'tragedy' is only an *imitation* of life and of the living deed; and

that life consists in action, and is never a mere quality. The æsthetic philosophers find the essence of world-beauty in a quality, in mere sensuous presentation. Epicurean materialist and Absolute idealist are alike sensationalists, their point of difference being that the materialist finds his ultimate in the momentary sensations of man's chaotic experiences, while the idealist is content only with the timeless sensationalism of an Absolute Consciousness. But the one and the other is evoking an illusion, an "imitation," not the "deed," of life.

Æsthetic philosophies

In a different context, where he is considering actual and not artistic purposes, Aristotle comes to the core of humanistic metaphysics. "As teachers consider their object achieved when they have shown their pupils at task, so it is with Nature. . . For the action is the end" (τὸ γὰρ ἔργον τέλος). Aristotle adds, "the action itself is the actuality" (ἡ δ'ἐνέργεια τὸ ἔργον); and it is doubtless this conception which dominates his notion that the proper business of art is the imitation of human deeds, and that its function is to make these deeds emotionally (and hence *actuatingly*) intelligible.

Metaphysics 1050a

I am aware that intelligibility means idealism, and that the deed Aristotle would have us imitate in art is the pattern rather than the execution of reality. I merely contend that the idealism is wholly relative to human understanding and desires, and that it in no wise excuses or explains away facts that are unreasonable and humanly objectionable. It is idealism because it promises a cure, not as being the statement of a healed condition.

Idealism relative

The notion that actuality consists in action may be taken in a Heraclitean way, as expressing the irre-

sponsible flux and flow of events. Lucretius describes the Roman Jehu, who, bored with the ennui of great mansions, drives furiously to his country villa, "as if to bear aid to a burning house"; arrives there but to yawn and nap, and then rushes back to the city. Here we have the very image of the meaninglessly strenuous life, the life uncontrolled by ideals and therefore unintelligible.

The strenuous life

But the other extreme, of complete intelligibility, can be only achieved by a life whose ideals have all been realized, and which is, therefore, brought to an end. "Call no man happy until the manner of his death be known" is Solon's wise word: no life can be appraised until it is over. Artistic portrayals of life do not invariably end with the death of the hero, but they do invariably end with the cessation of our interest in his career. To quote Aristotle once again: "An end is that which naturally follows some other thing, but has nothing following itself." And this holds of meanings as well as of events. Every finished teleology is a tragic dénouement.

Poetics, 1450b

There is fascination in generalizing the course of events and justifying them by their outcomes. For instance, I experience a thrill when I perceive the great foundation of human reason itself,—that principle of identity which is the bony support of all our thinking and the skeleton framework of all our truth—emerging powerful and triumphant from the mind's long schoolings in the magic of *similia similibus* and the quaint science of mythopoetic fancy. And again I feel a sense of final vindication when I perceive—as seems to me the fact—that human cruelty is a necessary step in the development of human sympathy: that without the generation of

Principle of identity

that understanding of another's suffering which makes cruelty possible, the further generation of painful understanding of another's suffering, which lies at the foundation of sympathy and sympathetic aid, could never have been. So viewing the matter, I can but feel that Nature has in a measure justified and atoned for her own barbarities.

Cruelty and sympathy

None the less I am perfectly aware that reasonings of this sort are essentially fallacious. They justify to *me,* perhaps, in my achieved insight Nature's inflictions of suffering; they do not justify them to the sufferers of times past or to come. In the history of the Universe one moment is no more momentous than another from the point of view of the spectator,—at least, morally; while from the point of view of the participants, his own entry and exit is for each the moment supreme. 'Justifications' must be as valid for the Mesozoic saurians and ice-age mammoths as for us of today. Otherwise, we are forced inevitably into the casuistical pitfall of expediency: "the end justifies the means." And the end, in such case, is one which is never, as Aristotle puts it, action and life; but is always mere quality, death itself.

Nature's justifications

Art (and I make the term catholic of systemic philosophies) is the great simulacrum of life; it is the means whereby we gain partial perspectives of life's partial intelligibilities. But being partial it is abstract; and being abstract it is static; and hence it is never quite true to that life which consists in active deeds and finds its actuality in effort. Art portrays the actual through the ideal; but ideals themselves are vital agents, whose very potency depends upon their power to grow,—to eliminate as

The art of philosophers

well as to transmute and absorb,—and growth permits of no end other than growth. The beauty that we gain from absolute perspectives can never be the adequate reflection of a growing and creative Nature.

XIV

Art dangerous

Art is a great and dangerous abstraction. It is great because it comes closer to presenting to our minds the universals that form the truth of reality than does any other mode of human thought. It is dangerous because this close similitude is ever persuading us to accept itself as the complete and faithful reproduction of reality.

Beauty

What Art abstracts from reality is Beauty: it is the business of Art to be beautiful, Art exists for the sake of Beauty, we say. But just because the beauty which the artist gives us is an abstracted beauty, a beauty taken out of its natural context and presented without its natural relations, just because of this, the Beauty with which Art enlightens us is a falsification of natural Beauty. It is static and fictive as are all conceptual universals.

None the less, if the art be true to Nature's inspiration, it will be true *of* Nature's actuating values. Art, we say, is idealization of Nature. But the ideality was suggested in Nature's procedures before it was made perceptible in the art. In other words, to speak with the Mediævalists, Beauty as a universal subsists *in rebus* metaphysically, before it can be presented *post rem* in the work of art.

Universalia in rebus

What, then, is this prior Beauty of Nature?

My reply is, (1) It is the universal *in re,* in the reality. It is not the universal that covers a multi-

tude of instances, but the universal that defines character; it is not the general, but the essential. (2) Such a universal is fundamentally a Platonic Idea incarnate; it is presented *in actu,* and its being is the actuality. That is, it is an actual, or actuating, ideal, —a living Form of Nature, expressive of Nature's present intention and desire. To put the matter otherwise, it is the idealizing activity of a given life-moment; it is the prophetic cast of experience, the quality which makes experience representable and hence foreseeable. (3) Therefore, since for man it is relative to human experience and possibility, it is Nature humanized. It is Nature conquered by human imagination and vitalized by human aspiration; thus forming a sort of mid realm, opposed on the one hand to the bodiless and utilitarian truth of Nature as known to Science, and on the other opposed to the brutality and uselessness of that chaotic Nature which cannot be humanly assimilated. Beauty is essentially imaginative conquest of chaotic experiences, ever extending its bounds as experience grows.

Platonic Nature

is Nature humanized

In thus defining the range of Beauty in the world, we have not exhausted the content of reality: we have not reduced the world to a spectacle of unalloyed charm, as is the custom of philosophers. On the contrary, we have explicitly recognized that there is an indefinite field of formless and unintelligible experiences which irk and frustrate human aspiration—experiences for which there is but the one name, *Ugliness.* The effort to escape this ugliness is the *human motive*—the motive toward intelligibility and order and creative freedom. But the effort is never wholly successful: for the two-fold

Ugliness

reason, that Beauty itself is dynamic and is made manifest only in the mood of aspiration, and that Nature is not only greater than human experience but greater than human possibility.

Man in bond to Chaos

Man's condition is, and must always be, that of a bondsman and a sufferer. He is in bond to Titanic Chaos and he suffers the tribulations of his anti-human environment. But bondsman though he be, he is free to strive after freedom, to combat Titanism and rebel against brutality, and above all to create for himself situation after situation of cosmic promise. Man's bondage to brute Nature means suffering; but the wistfulness of the bond moment, which is the vision of Beauty, means the right to unceasing endeavor, and it may mean immortality, too, if to mortal spirit be granted the strength for so mighty a combat.

Beauty in Nature is thus intimately a matter of conduct. I presume that this is in large measure responsible for the confusions of moral and æsthetic values which have beclouded metaphysics. 'Moral beauty' is character; but character is only a *post rem* abstraction—an æsthetic view of a personality, satisfactory only after the person is dead and so finally appraisable. 'Beautiful morals,' on the other hand, are conduct *in rebus;* and they mean *humanizing* morals. When a *line of conduct* is *selected,* by virtue of our representative and volitional powers, we have a kind of vital abstraction from experience. As an abstraction, it is a work of Art,—so that we can say that the greatest human artist is he who creates the most beautiful life. But just because the work of Art is, in this case, a life, and not an imitation of life, its character is converted into reality; or perhaps

Beauty in morals

I can more consistently say, that what we see as character is the fact of the personality, the ideal character embodied. Here, and here alone, we have the case where Beauty in Nature and in Art are one.

We have a special name for this kind of beauty, *Nobility;* and we regard it as the highest beauty. And now, may I ask, what is the characteristic condition under which this highest beauty appears? Is not the answer immediate,—pain, suffering? Nobility is the manfestation of humanhood under trial, and the greater the trial the greater may be the manifest beauty.

Nobility

Tylor recounts a simple Russian folk-tale:

There sat a Russian under a larch-tree, and the sunshine glared like fire. He saw something coming from afar; he looked again—it was the Pest-maiden, huge of stature, all shrouded in linen, striding towards him. He would have fled in terror, but the form grasped him with her long outstretched hand. "Knowest thou the Pest?" she said; "I am she. Take me on thy shoulders and carry me through all Russia; miss no village, no town, for I must visit all. But fear not for thyself, thou shalt be safe amid the dying." Clinging with her long hands, she clambered on the peasant's back; he stepped onward, saw the form above him as he went, but felt no burden. First, he bore her to the towns; they found there joyous dance and song; but the form waved her linen shroud, and joy and mirth were gone. As the wretched man looked around, he saw mournings, he heard the tolling of the bells, there came funeral processions, the graves could not hold the dead. He passed on, and coming near each village heard the shriek of the dying, saw all faces white in the desolate houses. But high on the hill stands his own hamlet: his wife, his little children are there, and the aged parents, and his heart bleeds as he draws near. With strong gripe he holds the maiden fast, and plunges with her beneath the waves. He sank: she rose again, but she quailed before a heart so fearless, and fled away to the forest and the mountain.

A Russian Tale

Here is the case of nobility in one's intimate and

individual concerns. Because it is viewed as an affair of individual conscience, we call it a virtue—the virtue of self-sacrifice. But transfer the nobility from the individual to the social context, view it in the historic mode, and immediately its æsthetic character becomes obvious and dominant. The fundamental interest of history is an æsthetic interest, and its impression an æsthetic impression. It does not, however, present us with an æsthetic *absolute* (be it momentary or timelessly eternal); on the contrary, the historical æsthetic is essentially an active, idealizing, creative æsthetic: it shows us the human conquest of Nature in process, with all the thrill of present and undecided battle.

Creative æsthetic

In one of his last addresses, William James, with his usual sure insight, comes directly to the point:

> Patriotism no one thinks discreditable; nor does any one deny that war is the romance of history. But inordinate ambitions are the soul of every patriotism, and the possibility of violent death the soul of all romance. The militarily patriotic and romantic-minded everywhere, and especially the professional military class, refuse to admit for a moment that war may be a transitory phenomenon in social evolution. The notion of a sheep's paradise like that revolts, they say, our higher imagination. Where then would be the steeps of life? If war had ever stopped, we should have to re-invent it, on this view, to redeem life from flat degeneration. Reflective apologists for war at the present day all take it religiously. It is a sort of sacrament. Its profits are to the vanquished as well as the victor; and quite apart from any question of profit, it is an absolute good, we are told, for it is human nature at its highest dynamic. Its "horrors" are a cheap price to pay for rescue from the only alternative supposed, of a world of clerks and teachers, of co-education and zoöphily, of "consumers' leagues" and "associated charities," of industrialism unlimited and feminism unabashed. No scorn, no hardness, no valor any more! Fie upon such a cattleyard of a planet!

James on the Moral Equivalent of War

And when we review our human past, do we not perceive in fact that it is the pomp and magnificence of civilizations, aye, even their spectacular cruelties, that have created their lasting impressiveness? We are indifferent to the captives that died under the lash when we behold the grandeur of the Pyramids; we forget that Assyria is the synonym of cruelty when we remember mighty Nineveh; of what moment to us is the bondage of Athens' hundred thousand slaves if it be the price of Hellenic glory? Nay, the Roman arena itself,—has it not given us the transfigurations of martyrdom? Perchance, we even respond with a faint thrill to its red delirium, forgiving its inhumanity to the madness of the spectacle, as we forgive the unnatural sin of the Renaissance Popes to the sensuous beauty which was its offspring.

Human felicity is not the measure of historic values

In retrospect, we perceive clearly the emergence of æsthetic values and the relative indifference of moral values. But the retrospective mode, as I have said, is philosophically a dangerous and a falsifying mode of thought. We incline to accept it as definitive; and it always defines what is finished and dead; not what is vital and growing. A proper philosophy of life must be based upon some living and operating element, such as present idealization; and this is directly interbound with present pain.

In a further paragraph of the paper from which I have just quoted, James offers us his substitute for war:

James' substitute

> There is nothing to make one indignant in the mere fact that life is hard, that men should toil and suffer pain. The planetary conditions once for all are such, and we can stand it. But that so many men, by mere accidents of birth and

opportunity, should have a life of *nothing else* but toil and pain and hardness and inferiority imposed upon them, should have *no* vacation, while others natively no more deserving never get any taste of this campaigning life at all,—*this* is capable of arousing indignation in reflective minds. It may end by seeming shameful to all of us that some of us have nothing but campaigning, and others nothing but unmanly ease. If now—and this is my idea—there were, instead of military conscription a conscription of the whole youthful population to form for a certain number of years a part of the army enlisted against *Nature,* the injustice would tend to be evened out, and numerous other goods to the commonwealth would follow. The military ideals of hardihood and discipline would be wrought into the growing fibre of the people; no one would remain blind as the luxurious classes now are blind, to man's real relations to the globe he lives on, and to the permanently sour and hard foundations of his higher life.

War upon Nature

The honeyed bliss of an unalloyed Paradise, be it temporal or eternal, is intolerable to a stalwart and sagacious humanism. It is James' moral nature that recoils against man-made war upon man; it is internecine and inhuman. But his philosophical nature equally recoils against the cheek-by-jowl sentimentality of a Universe that is peopled only by affinities. Rather he recognizes: (1) That the foundations of humanism are elementally and permanently sour and hard foundations, and that the life which is worthy of respect must be a life of conflict with what is harsh and painful and inhuman; and (2) that man's position with respect to Nature is essentially one of warfare,—without temporary armistice, with no prospect of Absolute Peace.

Moral realities

There is here no Utopian faith in an ultimate Quiescence of creative endeavor; and there is here no cowardly surrender to present bondage. Rather we are sounded to a battle more conclusive than

Armageddon and more grandly awful than Ragnarok: it is the battle of Man against Nature, the Powers of Light against the Powers of Darkness; and it must endure as long as Darkness and Light endure; and the essence of it is life and action; and its aim and purpose is the glory of the conflict: *τὸ γὰρ ἔργον τέλος, ἡ δ'ἐνέργεια τὸ ἔργον.*

Light and Darkness

XV

And now I am in a position to state, as I hope, clearly, the conception of Beauty which it has been my purpose to present.

Beauty

As I understand it, Beauty is a special type of experience, a phase of life. It is by no means the whole of life, and no perspective is attainable, be it microcosmic or macrocosmic, which can perceive naught but beauty in life and still be true to life. Pain and sin, suffering and ugliness, are just as real as their opposites, and they are altogether as intolerable as they seem to be. Further, they are unescapable so long as life continues, whether in this world or in a world to come: the honey of Paradise is but the embalmment of the spiritually dead.

Nature twofold

This means that in Nature there is no perfect Beauty, and this from the very fact that Nature is alive. For life itself is action, change, conflict,—perpetual assimilation and elimination, conquest and destruction; and the elements that are at war, as we men know them, are respectively the humane and the barbarous elements, the Good and the Bad, the Beautiful and the Ugly. Of these, the Good and the Beautiful represent the standard under which we fight, or the state for which we fight; they

represent that part of Nature and of life which is made intelligible to us, which is Hellenized, humanized. Over against this realm lies the brutish and meaningless realm of evil and monstrosity.

Vision of perfection

But from the very fact that life is action, and all its elements working elements, follows the twofold character of Beauty, as æsthetic fact and as moral inspiration. In the first of these characters it is the metaphysical description of humanized reality, of man's imaginative conquests conceived as a domain. In the second character it is the Supreme Good. But in neither character is it a perfected thing, but only a coming into perfection; or perhaps one had better say, since the perfection is never to be achieved so long as life is, it is the immortal vision of perfection.

That this vision is granted to a bond and mortal being, that it is, in fact, the *sanity* of mortal life and the *actuality* of human life, this, to my mind, is the one valid ground for belief that Beauty does exist independently of man in the being of Nature herself,—not as Nature's exclusive being, but certainly to us as her essential being. Beauty is the Divinity *in rebus,* as her image in the mind of man is his *post rem* revelation of Divinity.

Beauty is Divinity *in rebus*

If I name Beauty the Divine, I am but following Plato: "But of Beauty, I repeat again that we saw her there shining in company with the celestial forms; and coming to earth we find her here, too. . ." And I believe that my conception of her nature is not far from Plato's. For he saw Beauty as the Ideal which is at once the end of aspiration and the source of inspiration to us who are given in bond to material pain and imperfection.

He saw Beauty as at once the pattern of ideality and the essence of actuality, operating eternally for the salvation of a world eternally in need of salvation. Plato was no monistic denier of evil: rather he said that what counts in the world is Goodness and Beauty, and that Beauty is the proper and inseparable form of Goodness; Beauty is the countenance of the Noble and the Divine. Plato

It was the vivid recognition of evil and ugliness that brought, in a later and darker age, Plotinus' clearer expression of that factor of pain and suffering which enters into every profound experience of Beauty. For love of beauty, says Plotinus, being at once a reminiscence and an aspiration—a reminiscence of charm that can recur but can never be retained, an aspiration after glories that can be momentarily glimpsed but never achieved,—love of beauty is therefore both joy and suffering, self-exaltation and self-immolation. In the words of a later and nobler Platonist it is "the unknown God of unachieved desire." Plotinus

And this word from Giordano Bruno brings us once more to the last and finest manifestation of Beauty—in Nobility of character. Here, if ever, the ideal is made real in human experience, and as the jewel emerges from its matrix, the butterfly from its chrysalis, beautiful nature breaks free from brute nature. Here, if ever, we find life "at its highest dynamic." Giordano Bruno

The long ritual of human heroes and saints and sages,—do we not therein define the highest worth and the highest truth of life? Achilles, Æneas, Beowulf, Roland, Arthur . . . Socrates, Boethius, Bruno, Spinoza . . . Saint Stephen, Saint Heroes

Saints

Polycarp, Saint Francis of Assisi, Saint Catherine of Siena, Père Damien de Veuster . . . Sanctus Petrus, Sanctus Paulus, Sanctus Johannus, Sancta Maria. . . Do we not herein set our final valuation on the world, proclaiming that the beauty of the life which is kingly mid suffering is at once the crown and the cross of creation?

What, then, of the Providence in which these lives trusted?

The man in Kansas held that the impuissance of Providence proves that "gods and souls do not exist." So long as we regard God as the sort of being which the Absolute Idealists make of Him, I think that the Kansas man's inference is just. But defining Divinity as I have defined it, as the incarnation of a contending but not all-conquering Beauty and Righteousness in the midst of a Nature which is never wholly beautiful nor wholly righteous, defining it as that Cosmic Life whose creative being is conditioned by its enveloping Chaos, so defining Divinity there is not only no irrationality, but there is positive necessity for human faith in it.

The necessity is the necessity of experience as we know it, having that degree of humanistic integrity which we find in reason and image in art. There is to my mind validity in Descartes' *cogito ergo sum,* and also in the ontological argument. The truth and beauty which men perceive is genuine, even if relative; it holds good for our part of Nature at all events. I think that it is absurd to maintain that our part is the whole, even in form; but I do not therefore question its validity as a part. Rather I believe that human insight is the one stronghold of faith in a more than human Beauty.

Descartes' ontological argument

But it is a faith, and not in any logical sense a certainty. It is a faith in a human center, a human eddy, if I may so figure it, in the enveloping chaos. It is a faith which may best be described in Kantian terms as the *a priori* form of all our understanding. Our reason is founded in this faith; take it away and with it disappears the consecutiveness and rationality of all experience. We are left in the flux of rhapsodical sensations, clinging to the filmy illusions of mental cobwebs.

Faith an *a priori* form

The fact of living does not permit us to accept such illusoriness as possible; the mere fact of continuing life compels our faith in a reason which is more comprehensive than man's reason, as history is more comprehensive than an individual life. Such an inclusive reason could only be a Divine reason—a Divine mind of which man's is the image; and this, I believe, is the essential validity of the ontological argument.

Immortal souls

And now as to immortal souls.

Human science and reason are grounded in the faith that the images they present are true images of intelligible Nature. But the images themselves, at their truest, constitute that outward reflection and inward impulse which we have defined Beauty to be. And Beauty, at its highest, is that incarnate character which we instance in noble human lives. Character, then, as embodied in the living personality, is the supreme manifestation of that reasonableness in Nature in which we are bound to believe, if we are to live; and in which we are bound to live, if it be true.

Is such character the transitory creation of brief mortal years? Yes, if Chaos be the conquering

power; no, if truth be lastingly true. And in Beauty itself, the being of which is a kind of realization in promise, a prophecy of life never fulfilled, we have the presentiment of that perpetuity of aspiration in which our reason is the embodied faith.

XVI

Plato's mystic wisdom

There are utterances of Plato that affect me uncannily, as somehow more than human in their subtle penetration. And no dialogue is more permeated with the spirit of this oracular wisdom than is the *Symposium*. True, this dialogue is no display of dialectical power or of that grand Wisdom of the Reason which comes to expression in Plato's period of clarified thought. Rather, it stands for a Mystic Wisdom—the enigmatic lore of Chthonian powers spoken by the pained and confused tongue of some Pythoness, half inspired, half tortured. It is a wisdom that issues from the sphere of instinct rather than from that of reason—the dark puzzling Wisdom of the Earth, not at all the shining revelation of the Heavenly Ideas.

It is this instinctive level, with its mingling of impulsive certitude and evasive inspiration, that makes this wisdom seem at once the most intimate and human and the most incontrovertible of Plato's sayings, forthshadowing, as it seems to me, the one philosophy of life which has beset men's minds, since men were mind-gifted, with the sense of a desperate but secure salvation. "Love of the Beautiful set in order the empire of the Gods." Love is the beginning of law and order, both natural and supernatural; love is the source of all that is humanly friendly in the world, of all, therefore,

Love is the love of Beauty

that men name divine. "First Chaos was, and then broad-bosomed Earth, and after Love." And this creative Love is love of the Beautiful. This is what Plato adds to the mythic truth that was ancient even with Hesiod. Love is the love of beauty, and "of generation and birth in Beauty." Love is love of Beauty, and it seeks Beauty, as Love must ever seek; and it generates Beauty and brings the Beautiful to birth. But because, as Plato elsewhere says, "it is by Beauty that all beautiful things become beautiful," because Beauty herself must ever remain a far and beatific vision, revealing herself but partially and inconclusively in the world of life and generation, because of this, Love, which is love of Beauty, is love of an Ideal which can never be perfectly realized, but must ever remain the pattern of aspiration for men and for gods. "Wherefore," he says, "love is of immortality."

Wherefore, love is of immortality

Is not this the core of humanism, and of truth?

And is it not—verily, is it not also the essence of all those adumbrate philosophies (myths, we call them) which have been and are the uplifted symbols of man's redemption from brutality and chaotic destruction?

With the ancientest of civilizations this myth emerges. Forms huge and monstrous, like material exhalations of a tropic earth, are these old Egyptian deities, seeming to us more like the Jinn of Saracen necromancers—dead gods revealed to seers of the dead—than like vital embodiments of human imagination. Yet what gods have ruled longer on this Earth than Isis and her lord Osiris? Seb and Nut, Earth and Sky, were their parents, and monstrous Typhon was their half-brother. On the day that

Egyptian mysteries

Osiris was born a loud voice proclaimed the birth of a King of Men; and in his incarnate life he drew men, says Plutarch, from a beggarly and bestial way of living, teaching them the use of grain and the meaning of law; by poetry and music and sweet persuasion he won them to the finer life, nor had he any need of arms to establish his power. But Typhon, his half-brother, hated him because he was good; and Typhon lured him to his death, and dismembered and scattered his body,—which the weeping Isis gathered together and placed in the tomb. But Osiris became Lord of Life in the world to come.

De Ise et Osiride

We may accept, if we choose, Plutarch's interpretation of the myth: Whatever is orderly and reasonable and bright and good in the human soul, this, he says, is Osiris. And whatever in the earth and in the winds and in the waters and in the heavens and the stars is seasonable and due and orderly, this, too, is the image and embodiment of Osiris. But whatso is passionate and irrational and brutal, whatso is morbid and violent and devastating, in mind and in nature, this is Typhon. We may follow Plutarch, too, in his hopeful conviction that however contrary be the powers that make the world their battlefield, yet the better is the stronger power, and the better must prevail. We may follow in this because without hope and trust in the better power mankind cannot endure. If we be answered, we of today, with the scientific foreknowledge of the doom of life on this, our earthly planet, yet shall we answer back with the Egyptian that the world of our immortal hope is the world of a life beyond the grave where rules the resurrected

Plutarch's view

God. And of our dead we shall say, as said the Egyptian: "As surely as Osiris liveth, so shall he live also; as surely as Osiris did not die, so shall he not die; as surely as Osiris is not annihilated, so shall he too be not annihilated." Book of the Dead

Osiris was a Savior of Men. He was the embodiment, in this life, of the blessings of culture and reason; and he was the hope of a life to come. Like all Saviors he died a suffering and sacrificial death, offered up in atonement for a Cosmic sin; and like all Saviors he typified the descent of a Heavenly Illumination into a world darkened by an overshadowing and monster-infested Chaos.

The same myth is in the New World: Quetzalcoatl has been sent from the mansions of the Sun to bear to men the blessings of law and order and peace and the arts of civilization. But the chaotic powers of evil hate him, and contend with him, and afflict him,—till he sheds such tears that they penetrate the very stones of the earth. And he is driven forth from his Kingdom, to far-away Tlapallan. Yet, said the Aztecs, he will return again in glory, bringing salvation. Quetzalcoatl

And in Mithras did not the unconquered Sun himself—first-born of Heaven—descend unto a suffering atonement that men might immortally be saved? The Powers of Evil prevailed,—but only because their vision was brief and blinded: in the ages to come, the ages they could not read, he who so suffered for men was to save them through the very intensity of his passion. Mithras

And Prometheus, stark-stretched upon the grim sea-beaten crag, suffering an age-told agony, because he loved men overmuch! . . . . Great Olym- Prometheus

pus shook with the laughter of the Gods, while the gaunt Titan with Titanic suffering expiated the crimes of Chaos and purchased with his blood for mortal men an immortal Beauty.

The Man of Sorrows

Race after race, religion after religion, men have uplifted to human imagination the great symbol of a Love that can Sacrifice for a Beauty that can Redeem. And the image of a Man of Sorrows has become the image of that Divinity in Nature of which human nobility is the only figure and in which man's life is his utter confession of faith. And if in this faith men have found a faith in a life eternal, that is only because our mortal mood compels this: for love is the love of Beauty, and Beauty is the ideal and pattern of Life itself. "Wherefore love is of immortality."

EPILOGUE: WRATH AND RUTH

The Great War has been fought. The dead, brave and poltroon, innocent and criminal, lie in their graves. The maimed, the broken, and the bereaved, with such resignation as they can command, live on, facing the gray decline of unillumined years. And the great mass of mankind, beholding the fullness of their human deed, are brought face to face with their own reflection, judged of themselves.

The Great War

What philosopher, in the fall of 1918, could write of human nature and achievement as he would have written in the spring of 1914? What prophet can now prophesy as he would then have prophesied? Or what nation, of all earth's nations, can now cling to the purposes and politics which it pursued in that day, briefly past in time, but in thought remote and buried? The world has changed since 1914; the Titanism in human nature which we who call ourselves the civilized had deemed to lie deeper than Orcus has made the lands to tremble and has lighted cities with lurid flame; fanes are shattered and the old images are overthrown.

Titanism in human nature

Looked at from the vantage of our grim experience the ideals of 1914 seem shot through with the bizarre, the puerile, the presumptuous. Then we believed, with all our ostensible souls, in human self-sufficiency; we believed in hard reason and practical realities, in the panacean

powers of science and in the substantial good of properties acquired; we believed, gaily, inflatedly, in our superiority over all that was humanly past and in our ability to insure progress through the future; most of all, we believed in the importance of looking out for "Number One" —whether Number One were a man or a nation —and we trusted unblushingly in the white man's capacity to calculate and get the Good. Even our altruism—and surely it was the most amazing of our egoisms—was unabashed: the world was populous with reformers who called themselves servants, and proposed to be tyrants, with no other credential than the approbation of their own bland consciences. The whole attitude was taken as of course, and regarded as common sense, and lived in as finality; and man's prime virtue was held to be that he was self-made.

Conceit of human self-sufficiency

Then this self-made man produced his man-made war. There is a satisfaction of the kind we call grim to be derived from the clear fact that war is man-made; we shoulder the responsibility for the majority of our afflictions upon impersonal nature, but this we must accept; and accepting it, see in it plain truths of our own nature. Bitter as it is, the war is none the less a needed medicine; we had lived in a world of self-illusion, and worse, of ignoble self-illusion; the war has shattered this, pricked our bubble of conceit, and has shown us, not Man as he is, which God alone can know, but the civilized twentieth century man of Europe and America, blown with pride, as both worse and better than he had dreamed.

Man-made war

Aye, better as well as worse. All-seeing heaven alone knows what arrogance, avarice, lust, cruelty, diabolism, what storms of spite and flames of murderous hate, man has been shown capable of in this war. But there are other pictures, beautiful even in the midst of terror: heroism, devotion, righteous wrath, gentleness, martyrdom, like pure transfigurations of dross souls, which, even more than the first, give the lie to the idols we had erected.

Idols of philosophers

Among philosophers the rashest of these idolatries was surely that of human reason: we plumed ourselves upon our rationalities, our science; we styled our time an Age of Reason, an Enlightenment; we paraded our sense of reality and proclaimed the sufficiency of the intellect in the guidance of human affairs. And reason, deliberate and calculating, precipitated this war; and reason, cool and hard-headed, scarred its history with atrocity; and reason—in what name but in that of reality?—pandered to every baseness of material appetite. In such sense is reason our guide!

Reason

Self-seeking

But again, we philosophers, with what little disguise we proclaimed the biological primacy, in human nature, of the passion for self-indulgence. We called it utilitarian happiness; we chattered about fitness and self-preservation; but we meant to say that the sole key to human conduct is selfish hedonism. And now the spectacle of the war has shown us whole peoples, swayed by untaught pity, led to the surrender of their comfort, and thousands and repeated thousands of earth's common men making a glad

sacrifice of their lives for the good of other men and for the salvation of their ideals of right. Far from being first and fundamental, self-seeking is rather a weak and pacificist human sentiment: the springs of great action move elsewhere.

Sense of justice

Here, too, philosophers have been self-deceived; and in a third place by their notion that justice and right are an insight common to all normal mankind, a contribution of our common sense. For the war could never have been fought had not each human group in its turn been founded in the conviction that its cause was the just cause; wherefore we have had before us the profound and sobering spectacle of men in a passion of righteousness slaying one another and giving themselves up to die, each that his idol should not fall. Other motives, some ignoble, some instinctive, have played their part in the movement of the war; but who can doubt that they pale into irrelevancy beside the dominance of these—the reason, the pity, and the sense of right—which so resistlessly give the lie to all that we have adjudged of human nature? And again, who can doubt, in his philosophic moods, that in this great and terrible conflict of man with man, wrath and ruth are revealed as seated traits of that nature, traits which, even when noblest, show how sadly our affairs are out of gear with the world?

Mingled motives

War's apocalypse

The philosophy of our past—amused of its own drolleries, enamoured of its own sagacities, convinced of its own sweet reasonableness—is today fordone, blighted and withered under the blazing apocalypse of war. Its problems are no

longer problems, nor its solutions ways of grace. It is true that its language is still spoken by the many among us, men with clogged ears and eyes of clay. Even over the ruin ministers of consolation come talking of the eventual human "good" which will make of the war a blessing and will justify all its expenditures, all its blood and torments. "Justify"? but to whom? Are not the slain slain, and can their blood be silenced? Have not the tortured suffered, and are their pains no heritage of ours? Is the past non-existent? For whom, then, is the justification? to whom the good? The man of affairs does well, perhaps, to forget upon what foundations he builds; but philosophy moves not save by reflection and in its essence it is timeless.

War's justification

And again they come to us, the comforters, with the high word Democracy: it is for democracy, for the race, for humanity, that all is endured. But do we know, in our heart of hearts, that the democracy is worth it? If reason is no guide, if our masters are our passions, is it indeed so great a thing to make passion everywhere free? . . . Yet again, religion is to be, not re-born, but re-made: a *new* religion of humanity is to redeem the war's losses. But who, among men acquainted with thought, can dream that a creed made to order can win belief? . . . Nay, what is the truth? Is not pugnacity human, and as deeply human as charity? Three score years of peace we may have, for the war has been fearful and exhausting; but we can not make over human nature in a day, and pugnacity, the brute willingness to fight, is an in-

Democracy

Pugnacity

stinct of human nature. Indeed, it may be, philosophically and truly speaking, as precious an instinct as any that we possess, for who among men, up to this hour, can give philosophical warrant, to me or any other Manichæan, that this our universe is itself pacifist, and that there is within it no deep and eternal and bloody warfare of good and evil?

How deep is error?

To err is human. . . . Aye, aye; but how profound, how inscrutably substantial is this illusion in our human composition? What kind of a universe created me, that it must deceive me? Is it, too, wandering and uncertain or is it curst at the core with duplicity? Are we altogether in error about right and wrong, good and evil, true and false? and helplessly in error? Is there no hold which our reason or feeling or moral sense can secure? Is there no cosmic sanity, no place where men can stand square with their world?

Questions such as these are the old questions of philosophy. But the old answers have played out into shallows, and now we must take them up again, from their source, which is the perennial source of human experience and which today is ruddied with new-shed blood. It is a weary toil, and one oft-repeated in the long course of human thinking; but it is ours. At the outset, we may be clear on one point at least: the ornate edifice which we have named Science, and the high ritual which we have called Rationalism, are tokens of a wanton and degraded cult, only to be cleansed save as they be converted to a purer and humaner understanding of the Good.

Science and the Good

Guidance of reason

Aforetime it was said, *Tantum religio potuit suadere malorum;* today, with the dread fruits of war outspread before us, we must repeat, *Tantum ratio, tantum scientia*—to such ills doth reason also persuade! . . . But at least we recognize the ills; out of the past we have this one conviction to build upon.

Pascal

What is the Good? That is still our problem; in philosophy it is the sole final problem. *La science des choses extérieures ne me consolera pas de l'ignorance de la morale, au temps d'affliction; mais la science des mœurs me consolera toujours de l'ignorance des sciences extérieures.* So spoke Pascal, doubting at the beginning of our period what the succeeding centuries have wholly justified him in doubting; for this at least we know of man, passionate pilgrim that he is, his truth is an inward and driving truth, not a scaffolding of external things. Nay, Pascal, in his fragment *De l'esprit géométrique,* makes it our very punishment and corruption that the reason is enslaved to the passions, and "it is to punish this disorder by an order conformed to it," he says, "that God casts his light into the mind only after having conquered the rebellion of the will by a sweetness wholly celestial, which charms it and leads it."

Celestial charm

Your twentieth century philosopher of science is perhaps little inclined to harken to the recluse of Port Royal, savant and mathematician though he was; yet by some such search as Pascal's, for a new grace and a new illumination of the intelligence, must the quest of the Good be carried forward. All our powers—reason, feeling, moral

The need of Grace

sense—are selective in their operation; all alike, they pursue and they abandon pursuit, and their ends are determined by some nature more profoundly ours than we are willing to own. Yet it is just this profoundly human nature, which must also in its degree be the cosmic nature, that we must fathom, if we are to make for philosophy in dividing the good from the evil in all that tempts us. Herein is shown our task, herein the destiny of thought.

To be sure the task is beset with an apparent futility. Often as the quest has been essayed in the past, even so often has it ended in deception; not that naught has been gained, but assuredly naught in which we could rest, no quiescence, no end: the nature of man, which alone can show us the nature of the world and alone can be the measure of the Good, is still dark and unfathomed; how, then, can we hope to do better than our fathers in philosophy? Nay; we can not. But we shall do, perchance not as well as they, but still our part, if we but make the attempt in what new light our new experience has given us. For, indeed, history itself is the portrayal of truth, and the search for values is their essence; we must cease asking for values that are but eulogies of the past; we must find them in life itself, in time, not in eternity. Once more to quote the wise Pascal: "Naught satisfies us save the combat; not victory itself"; and a more ancient and metaphysical framing of the same truth strikes off the very form of nature, man's and the world's, τὸ γὰρ ἔργον τέλος, ἡ δ' ἐνέργεια τὸ ἔργον. To which, again, Pascal adds the codicil: *"Craindre*

Man the measure

Actuality is action

la mort hors du péril, et non dans le péril; car il faut être homme."

Must Goodness and Beauty die?

At the last, so we all know, to earth-born men death must come, to individuals and to nations and to the race. This fact also philosophers must contemplate and measure. And if we say now that the Good is in our human quest of it, how can we pronounce, foreseeing our doom, aught save its ultimate defeat and destruction? Are not Goodness and Beauty, after all, but a flare in time, to be snuffed out in eternity? Who shall be the conquerer, save the last great Darkness? . . . There is no vanity so great as is prophecy; wherefore I would give such token as I may, using the language of probability, and in the form of a myth.

A myth

Through many millennia will have passed the circle of human affairs and through many millennia earth and sea and air will have surrendered to human wills their secretest powers; industry will have branded the continents with man's geometry; the arts will have starred them with monumental splendors; in the domain of thought science will have organized its numbers into a very simulacrum of the perfect cosmos; and in polities all felicities will have been lived through. But yet other millennia will pass, and the last man will die as certainly as the first man has died. But not without heritors. No doubt, long ere this, man's mammalian companions will have succumbed; but the birds will still survive. Light of weight and swift of wing, able to forage in every clime and to find food in every cranny,

The birds will survive

the birds are less slaves to gravity than is aught other earth-dweller: they can laugh at man's clumsy aviations, for their domain of the air is not by grace of earth's mineral, but in defiance of it. And the birds are artists and builders and songsters, devotees and exemplars of beauty. Wherefore, long after man's tall monuments have crumbled, and centuries after the bones of the last human race have bleached and weathered, the birds will live on—Earth's final race—and over the tombs of men departed their songs will answer the music of the spheres, as the Sun dies away into the cosmic twilight. Surely it was the anticipation of such a finality which inspired the Wikeno tale to which mine is but the supplement; for these Indians say that the immortals would have endowed men with everlasting life, but a little bird wished death into the world: "Where shall I nest me in your warm graves," it cried, " if ye men live on forever!" So it was decreed that men must die, and the immortals returned to heaven, whence they looked down and beheld men mourning their dead; whereupon mortal souls were transformed into drops of the blood of life, blown broadcast by the winds unto a new birth.

An Indian tale

Those only smile at myths who are unacquainted with human history and with the motives which lie deepest in human conduct, and forget that that conduct is the end and its motives the final motives. In our own day and hour we are brought fearfully and inwardly into the presence of two such motives, wrath and ruth, which have transfigured, for a new cycle,

the visage of our nature. Let them be but righteous wrath and penitential ruth, for our penitences are our supreme credos, and our condemnations are our fullest measures of this two-fold world. Then may the requiem of the birds be as a last great orison in our behalf, pleading the cause of man, not for what he has done, but for the dust that is in him and the breath which is his life, which are of the Cosmos, which are of God.

Wrath and Ruth

Lacrymosa die illa
Qua resurgat ex favilla
Judicandus homo reus:
Huic ergo parce, Deus!

VII. HUMAN PERSONALITY

. . . . τὸ ἐπ' οὐρανὸν ἀπὸ γῆς διάστημα· καὶ τοῦτ' ἂν εἴποι τις οὐ μᾶλλον τῆς Ἔριδος ἢ Ὁμήρου μέτρον.

—*Longinus.*

I

Physical personality

THERE is a way we have of judging one another which is a matter partly of intuition and partly of that vital sympathy we call instinct. On meeting a stranger we form conclusions about him almost immediately, responding to his presence with certain feelings which temper and tone our conduct toward him. We become aware, for example, of a distinctive physical stamina—muscles strong or weak, nerves tense or flaccid, an impetuous or a reticent bodily disposition,—and we gauge the man at a given potential, acknowledging or denying his mastership of ourselves.

Now all this is not merely seeing. What the sense of sight furnishes us is, at first blush, but a mazy manifold of color and light. It is ourselves who interject into this manifold the vividness of reality, the hue and stir of life. If we see things distinct, living, it is only because our sensations are already perceptions, entering consciousness biased and shot through by our own vital experience. This experience (whether stored in memory or instinct) is what imbues sense with its nice observation. The satisfaction which we feel in the subtle and lissome grace of

a maid's movements, the provocation in the merry flash of her countenance, do not spring from any specialty of the vision, but from the fact that she is humanly close to our sympathies and understanding. The whole art of human living, the strange quick knowledge with which the generations of our ancestors have endowed us, falls into sudden illumination, and we greet it with a ready and responsive smile.

Vital sympathy

Nor is this play of vital sympathies restricted to perception of human life. Our comprehensions of animals are mainly ascriptions of man-like function to organisms whose analogies with our organism cannot but be felt. We leap; we run; in dreams at least we fly; and when we see these actions performed or suggested by other creatures, our understanding—nay, our seeing—is in large part an incipient imitation of them in our own bodies.

The muscled beast has thus a potential of its own. The clean turn of the limb, the compact adaptation of the wing, impress us not as mechanism but as expression of movement and life. And when we see vixenism in the manners of sparrows, strenuosity in lambs, a placid domesticity in the ruminant cow, we do but bring into exercise some feature of that general animal nature of which we with them are co-heirs. Of course the nearer the action or trait conforms to human canons the closer is the felt kinship and understanding. I doubt not that the dog is in some degree indebted for his place in our affections to his cogitative capacity for wrinkling the brows, and the reason why the lion

Kinship with animals

seems so much nearer human comprehension than the striped and spotted of his kind may well be the impression of brow which the mane gives to the leonine countenance; the dignity of the king of beasts is the dignity of the aspect of intelligence.

Eyes

But of all the kinly tokens by far the most impressive are eyes. In the presence of no animal with recognizable eyes is man quite free from certain modesties and subjective reservations elsewhere not manifest. It is not the vertebral column but palpable eyesight that constitutes the true insigne of aristocracy in the animal world. Creatures the most monstrous, the octopus, the squid, conspicuously favored with this mark, are thereby accorded thrice over the respect constrained from us by all eerie life.

Now the reason for this unique suggestiveness of eyes is not far to seek. For just as movement is the pre-eminent token of *life,*—so that clouds and lightnings, winds and rivers, the circling heavenly bodies, are the last of inanimate objects to lose animistic interpretation,—so is the eye and its seeing pre-eminently the sign of *intelligent life.* An eye always seems to mean thought—vivid, tangible consciousness. It may be mild, innocent, laughing, shy, frank, bold, furtive, malicious, cruel, evil: all the gamut of disposition and mood is in it, all the range of purpose and desire. We follow it in the thrust and parry of conversation, we search it for sudden confidences, we study it as the open ledger of another's thoughts, till it becomes the outward epitome of intellectual life. In ourselves it

Token of intelligence

is the chief instrument for the acquisition of knowledge, whose deep impress causes us to designate that within to which clear thinking is due the 'mind's eye' while our highest type of knowledge we call 'inner vision.' Hence, wherever eyesight is, there, we impulsively feel, must be intelligence,—though it is only upon reflection that we recognize this intelligence as our own.

So we read our lives into other living creatures, judging their bodily feelings and appetites and re-creating their temperaments by analogies, a little distorted, from our experiences and instincts. But we by no means restrict the hypostatizing process to animate forms. Primevally, the whole tremulous world is astir with impulse and endeavor, human at the core, and the whole geste of Nature is recorded in heroics and given form in the bright blazonry of man's imagination. And even in these maturer modern days we have not thrown off the ancient and necessary propension; though with a restricted and stinted life, we still vivify and humanize nature. The cunning interplay of forces which physics would make the world to be is only the apotheosis of motion, the machine at its acme. And what is the machine save a monstrous and mutilated life? a body fitted with all clever device, adapted to all nice operation, yet bereft of that inner direction and sense which alone can give intelligibility? The machine is a companion being to ourselves, the key to whose reality is wanting; possessing man-like efficiency, it is yet destitute of the inner motive which makes that

Animism and mechanics

efficiency comprehensible; hence it is a thing distorted, deformed, a veritable Frankenstein's monster. This, I take it, is why we are prone to feel a nervous dread of our own most characteristic handiwork, the great tools of our material subsistence, dimly realizing that in all of them is something baffling reason and offensive to friendly imagination.

Doubtless this suggestion of mutilated life, offending as it does the ancient and deep sympathies of our kind, has much to do with our revulsion in the presence of the dead. The mere body is a most marvelous machine, yet it is only by dint of sophistic intellection that we are able to get up a passable admiration for the nice articulation of the skeleton or the neat economies of the interplaying muscles. The suggestion of something in principle infinitely nobler than mechanism, the suggestion of life, is too intimate for us easily to tolerate its absence; we cannot brook the fall. It is observable that the skeleton, from which the suggestion is somewhat further removed, is more susceptible of lukewarm contemplation than is the unaltered corpse, with its imperious reminiscence of life. But with the impression yielded by these what contrast is given by the sculptor's representation of the body! Here there is no thought of inner mechanism; there is nothing to dissect, nothing to tear apart or analyze; and so there is no hint of death or mutilation. The whole work is an invitation to imaginative interjection of vital fire, and in the act of appreciation the imagination flashes the response, imperceptibly swift. The physical

The body and its life

form becomes an incarnate mood, thrice intense because thrice purified in its marble abstractness; there is no flaw, neither dross of flesh nor futility of vacillation, but just the poise and instancy of living at its height.

It is not for me here to enter upon the psychical complexities involved in apprehension of the physical personality. Enough that these are built up of the enormously intricate histories of our forefathers' lives under the control of that bent of Nature which has made our race and our several characters what they are. Granted that it is not the mere body, the mere machine, but the living body, the inspirited man, that alone is beautiful or terrible in human appearance, the reasons for this or that feeling or response in the presence of this or that physical person belong to what is specialized in our natures. They belong to what I have termed vital sympathies, meaning those obscure yet ruling elements of human character derived from the life-histories of the order of being, genus, species, race, to which we belong. Our vital sympathies are in a sense epitomes of these life-histories; they are precipitates of experience taking form partly in ancient and well-ordered instincts, partly in impulses and aptitudes only flittingly grounded in character; they are modes of conscious response, ever on the verge of manifestation, and life largely consists in their play and counterplay under the impulsion of the myriad suggestions of our daily encounters.

The inspirited man

In these encounters familiarity goes for much. But human nature is wide and may be piqued

to the most unexpected interests and admirations, as Desdemona's for her Blackamoor. In our estimates of physical personality we owe much to the traditionary ideals of our race, whose heroes and ogres are the bases of our admirations and antipathies, yet something we owe to the mixed new being each one of us is—ready to welcome a novelty not too novel or to recognize a temerarious magnetism in a type which our fathers could have found only repellant. At the basis of physical charm lies fullness of physical life—buoyancy, grace, strength, the clear lines of the vigorous body, the bright hues of health. But over and above this, perhaps more appealing as surely more subtle, is the suggestion of the animating mood or thought, be it the lurking of a wizened pre-human smile, the shadowy semblance of a dead and forgotten race whose women alone survived, or the nettlesome anticipation of a froward evolution.

Traditional and hereditary ideals

Yet here I have already passed the bounds of the merely physical personality, am already encroaching upon the mental and spiritual. This is inevitable. For the man that we meet in physical space is only the symbol of the man we deal with and come to know. The highest type of human beauty and the completest manifestation of life is that in which we divine an actuating intelligence capable of rousing our own to its unforeseen best. Physical life is never merely physical: even the remote protozoan carries an unescapable flavor of fussy sentience, while the degree of consciousness we attribute to the progressive life-forms ever outstrips the

Physical life never merely physical

complexity of their physical development. For this the reason can be no other than that final one: our human nature measuring itself forth upon the world which is its context.

II

There is, then, encountered in the mere physical approach something more than the merely physical, something intangible but vivid,—life, human life, human nature. For its initial term, consider the sleeping child. There is a softness and flush about the cheek and lips, a freshness of the smooth clean-curved brow, a mobility of the delicate lashes (all so far from harsh and waxen death), gathering into a kind of luminous halo, as from a subtle and hidden flame. The child is the generalized man, and in the presence of its living body already we grasp the scheme of man's nature, instinct within.

The child a generalized man

And so when we meet the man himself,—visage over-pencilled by that symbolism of the flesh which it becomes the lesson of our lives to read,—with unerring sense for the real presence transubstantiating the physical, we guess beyond the symbol to mood and thought, and beyond the mood and thought to character and power. That we do this is not a little remarkable, for it involves a kind of perpetual duplicity of apprehension which surely could only have arisen in compliance with a more masterful reality than any that pertains to ordinary sense-perception,—and this human personality is.

Symbolism of the flesh

Perhaps our greatest analytical difficulties come in connection with our most ordinary

modes of thought. Where familiarity has bred custom, we judge with inscrutable swiftness, and our keenest inferences come so impulsively to mind that we accept them without question,—or, if question occur, comfortably accredit them to intuition. We meet one another and know one another; or we learn to know in the briefest fragments of intercourse. There is a whole complex impression which a human being makes upon a fellow human being, regulating the latter's conduct toward him. Such impressions constitute our mutual recognitions and are the cues by heed of which we get along together.

Recognitions

Of course I do not mean to say that these impressions are adequate or necessarily true. They are the most superficial of acquaintanceships, rough sketches to be filled in as occasion may offer with the detail of character. But even so they form the general burden of our social life; and no matter how simplified and made uniform by social convention and rule, they are yet of a nature sufficiently involved to puzzle comprehension. I have already dwelt on the physical impression, on the sharpness of its challenge and the imperious speed with which we throw back the guess of life and force: the net result of this impression is a sense-perception hardly obviously sensible; the net result is an apprehension of a life-experience analogous to our own and somehow in sensible communication with ours. A living human being (till more be known) is a generalized human nature, a blank personality to be stamped in the die of experience.

Social living

The physical impression is thus a preliminary

outstripped even in its inception; following it comes the impact of the personality. It is odd how very little social fencing—a few commonplaces, a stray remark—may suffice to personalize. We are so very close together, we mortals, or our common human nature is so sympathetically broad, that at least such mutual awareness as is necessary for the perfunctory part of life is practically spontaneous. We may not in the preliminary formality judge another at full or right value, but we do judge whether or not he be worth cultivation; we judge, that is, whether he represents the worthy or the unworthy possibility in ourselves.

Mental-physical criss-cross

The truth is there is a vastly involved criss-cross of the mental and physical worlds which to understand we must first understand how these worlds are never very clearly distinct in consciousness. Objects of sense-perception have not, as facts of experience, that physical isolation which our neat definitions seem to imply. They are all more or less 'charged' with inference and mood—with the psychical interjection which is ultimately what makes them objects and significant.

Take, for example, a tree: the tree is not merely a play of color and light in three dimensions; even for the vision alone it is very much more; it is a rooted and solid fact, compact of resistance and resilience. In seeing it we directly perceive the hardness and stability of its trunk, the pliancy of its twigs, the firm texture of its leaves—nay, we even perceive the ramifications and strenuous holds of its roots and the

Sense-perception

cells and striations of its inner structure. Psychologists used to annex these qualities to the visual image as more or less extraneous associations, but we need only attempt the difficult feat of perceiving a tree-image—mere color and light—in place of the palpable tree, to know how completely we do in fact (inference with impression) 'sense' the object as a whole. Its whole substance and history is in its mere presence.

In a perhaps more conclusive way æsthetic values enter into things. The beauty of a rose, the sublimity of a wild sky, are so much a part of the rose and the sky that we cannot conceive them without these qualities. The reality of which our feelings and the rose or the sky are at once a part is indissoluble.

We know one another at two removes

Now all this, though in kind the same, is far less difficult to comprehend than our perceptions of persons. For when we meet a man we judge at two removes: we see not only in the flesh a life, but in the life we see thought and emotion, impulse and will. In his nods and glances, twitchings and turnings, we become aware of his perceptions; in his expression, we feel his emotions; in his comments or silences, we come to know his thoughts. We reconstruct for him a state of consciousness, an inner life, which gradually, as its reality grows upon us, segregates itself from the sensuous environment, becoming a distinct and separate world, analogous to, but not within, ours. This other world does not share with ours even the same physical space: its visions and imaginings are in another

space, to us forever transcendental. The touch of a friend's hand, the glance of his eye, is but a ghostly token from a realm, for all its familiarity and urgent presence, hopelessly remote.

Other-conscious being

I imagine that a person Crusoe-like long isolated from his fellows, on renewing their society might feel keenly this uncanny sense of duplex life and twained worlds. Familiarity ordinarily blinds us to its strangeness, and it is only now and again, non-plussed by another's unwonted expression or by an unaccountable impulse of his character, that we become abruptly aware that what we gaze upon is but the enigmatical shadowing of other-conscious being.

Character

Yet not even in the reconstruction of another's consciousness, strange as this act is, do we gauge the reach of our inferences. In our daily intercourse, we by no means rely upon inferred thoughts and feelings for our final estimate of motive and propension. We judge very much farther than the immediate consciousness; we judge mood, disposition, life *motif:* behind the mental state lies the moulding character, and this is our final reconstruction. The sure proof is that we allow for a certain eccentricity in the concrete, momentary experience, and assume an underlying constancy and consistency, an enduring, developing character, more real and reliable than any temporary conscious fact. Indeed, we often assume to know another better than he knows himself, counting his present consciousness as of necessity biased by its environment and so manifesting a kind of distemper of the soul that somewhat distorts its real and deep intentions.

A game at chess

In illustration let us suppose two unacquainted players to meet at the chessboard. The first few moves reveal only familiarity, or want of it, with the conventional openings. But presently, the play fairly on, the silent opponents begin to feel each other's quality. On the one side, we will say, there is conscious mastery; on the other, a dawning sense of inferiority. Now I know of no more realizing revelation of the power of another's personality than comes to one who feels himself helplessly succumbing to the slow toils of a master player. Behind the insignificant bits of wood, flaunting their impeccable assurance, looms the quiet calculation of the opposing mind, building up unescapable attacks, frustrating every desperate expedient to freedom. But behind even this, more invulnerable, more terrible, is felt the reserve power of the control, the pitiless sufficiency of the chess-intelligence. So, if the weaker player stumble blindly in his play, if his hand tremble and the sweat break upon his brow, the tribute is rather to the hidden and machine-sure mind than to the trivial loss of an idle game.

Non-physical presence

This illustration—narrowed as it is to the apprehension of purely intellectual character—suggests the vividness with which, on occasion, the nonphysical presence may be felt. For the while, sense of bodily being disappears. The conventional chessmen on their prim conventional squares are all of the physical world that the mind entertains—no better indeed, than purely mental symbols. The reality that is felt is the aggressive, combating intellect, with

which one is almost tangibly in contact, and behind even this is the besetting personality. One stands on the very verge of a nearer and keener acquaintanceship than human limitation allows; a dormant sense seems issuing as from a vague, prenatal growth to give new and powerful knowledge.

Intensified understanding

Such intensifications of ordinary judgments—found oftenest, perhaps, in certain supreme compassions of friendship—are, I take it, sudden tensions or strainings of the evolutional *motif* in accordance with which social intelligence develops. This *motif* demands of us mutual understandings, mutual approximations of character. Whether these be by the whetting of the mind's keenness, through combat, or by the broadening of responsiveness, through sympathy, they must needs in certain moments receive access of conscious force for the reason that experience is mainly given form and fixity by its times of stress. It is the sharp spur of our own need that awakes in us awareness of another's spiritual reality.

Sympathy

Indeed the awakening is in large part self-awakening. We cannot see save with the light that we bring. All comprehension of character is ultimately comprehension through sympathy; that is, through imaginative creation of the other's life; and it is impossible for us imaginatively to create *ex nihilo*—only within the range of our own possibilities can sympathy be awakened. I say 'possibilities,' rather than 'reality.' Much that we are is the time's accident: our present life is 'ours' merely by courtesy; for the

most part, it is what it is because the world wills it so. None the less, in the midst of this preoccupying present, we are dimly conscious of a vague half-owned self, our hopeful 'best self,' more intimate and lasting than the superficial reality of consciousness. It is this elusive self which is expressed by and engrosses our 'possibilities,' and it is these (already on the verge of realization, perhaps), which are illumined now and then in the great moments of our recognitions. In the time of stress, encountering another whose nature fulfills our own till then hidden ideal, we become glad in his strength and satisfied in his sufficiency, little witting that the secret of our revelation of his character is a sudden growth of our own.

'Self' elusive

In *Colombe's Birthday* Browning portrays such an encounter. The theme is elementally simple: Colombe, in her need, finding Valence, thereby finds herself. Outwardly the event is her progressive understanding of him, with its oddly investigative procedures; inwardly and truly, it is no less than her own soul's new birth. The salient meaning of two people's mutual knowing of one another—its value and bearing for man as a social being—is directly phrased. To Valence, in the exaltation of her confidence, Colombe says:

Colombe

> "This is indeed my birthday—soul and body,
> Its hours have done on me the work of years . . .
> Believe in your own nature, and its force
> Of renovating mine! I take my stand
> Only as under me the earth is firm;
> So, prove the first step stable, all will prove.
> That first I choose: [*Laying her hand on his.*]—the next to take, choose you!"

Valence

And after she has withdrawn, the reciprocal change appears in Valence. He begins to perceive unsuspected powers in *himself* (which, be it noted, *she* had seen):

> "What drew down this on me?—on me, dead once,
> She thus bids live,—since all I hitherto
> Thought dead in me, youth's ardors and emprise,
> Burst into life before her, as she bids
> Who needs them."

Falling in love

This may be falling in love. From the sociological point of view it is none the less interesting, for falling in love is, perhaps, the most important of human *rapprochements*. And the essential point here is that Browning shows what it may mean, at its highest efficiency, for the individuals concerned.

Of course in ordinary leisurely experience we have no equally aggressive apprehensions of one another. None the less we do judge to much the same intent if not to the same degree. We never stop with the mere physical impression and it is seldom that we go no further than the current mental coinage. Perhaps this may be realized most clearly in judgments of art. What is it we mean by 'knowing' an artist? Is it not the result of a series of impressions of his work, the work in which he has expressed his own seeing, as well as he may, and has so given us an inkling of his style of thought? Under the stimulus of his hints we reconstruct in ourselves something of his feeling and point of view, and then, on the basis of our common human nature, instinctively generalize the man. It is the *mode* of seeing or thinking, not the particular vision or

Understanding of art

thought, that gives the clue to character. Manifestly there are all sorts of idiosyncracies of style, technique, and topic, by which we can make judgments, but judgments on such bases go no deeper than the Bertillon measurements in the police galleries; it is not by or through them that we feel the cool charm of Corot, the phantasmic splendour of Turner, or the attraction of Rousseau's scenic sagacity; there is something beyond the canvas, a way of seeing it coaxes us to master, which is the real and inner message of the art.

The artist's style

But there is no more convincing proof of the ulteriorness of our judgments (as there is no more saving human virtue) than is to be found in our inveterate habit of discounting one another's faults of action to the favor of character. It is seldom, indeed, that we believe a man quite so frail as his deeds. We instinctively and thoroughly believe in motives deeper than conscious motives dominating each man's intention and urging him to a more ideal life. We concede to him all manner of weaknesses; he is in bond to the world, the flesh, and the devil; but we excuse his weaknesses for the rigor of the bond, and over and beyond all insist that he has in himself a spark of that divine impetus which now and then makes heroes and saints, and so glorifies our faith. It is for this spark, this ideal and real, yet unrealized character, controverting his actions and lying deeper than his thoughts, that we cherish our fellow man; it is this, not the partial, mutilated being which each as an historical entity must be, that we love in

The spark of divinity

him; and it is this that enables us to maintain our own lives in good courage.

I think it is worth while to ask oneself what is it that gives dignity and nobility to such a character as Hamlet's. Certainly it is nothing Hamlet does; his deeds are mostly sorry blunders. Nor again is it his motives; revenge may be dignified, perhaps, but never noble. Hamlet's nobility is in his ideal self—the self that we know so vastly better than he knows it; and his tragedy is the tragedy of wrecked possibility, the fine soul gone wry. We read his life with hardly a passing awareness of its materia, its 'business,' but the terrible breaking down of his spirit's house (not in madness but in unfulfillment), this it is which arouses in us tragic terror and pity.

Hamlet

From all this we may generalize that just as human nature is a kind of natural law of the human species, so a man's character is a kind of formulary of his individual life. It is what, crediting to environment some percentage of aberration, we inly paint as his true portrait. It is the complex of motive which we formulate as the key to his biography—a harmony of impulses leading to the harmony of effects which his total action involves, and wherever an action fails of this harmony we say that it is not true to his proper self.

The key to biography

Thus do men come to know one another. Of this knowledge two traits are to be noted. First, that we seem to know another better than he knows himself, that we judge beyond the temporalness of his present thought or feeling to what is steady and sure, nor ever reckon what he

actually is by his own self-understandings; we universalize him, biographize him, endow him with an ideal temperament and life *motif*. Now the second trait concerns the meaning of our knowledge to ourselves. For what we care for and love in another is just this ideal, unrealized self: never what he is, but what he promises to be; never the seen fact, always the biding possibility.

The unrealized self

Let it not be understood that I mean to affirm our knowledge of one another to be always sure or true. That is far from the fact. Most of what is heartrending in human life comes from our incomprehensions. In the long years of Javert's persecution of Jean Valjean he understood neither his victim nor himself. Maeterlinck turns the tragedy of *Monna Vanna* upon a wife's too idealistic confidence in a husband's faith in her. Ibsen's Nora awakes with pitiful surprise to find her own spiritual deformity outmatched by her husband's littleness and selfishness. Yet each of these instances is in another way instructive. For Javert at the last discovers his own unsuspected capacity of being noble—beaten, though it be, for this life. And Giovanna, self-betrayed, through her husband's frailty yet finds self-knowledge. While finally the truth and magnanimity of Ibsen's idealism forbade that Nora should believe even Helmer hopelessly lost: having faith in her own possible redemption, she could not wholly deny his.

Jean Valjean

Nora

Giovanna

The significance of our efforts to understand one another is less their achievement than their endeavor. The fact of the effort is a fact of self-

stimulation. In seeking to know others we come to know better ourselves, and in emulating what we conceive to be noble in others we develop our own best possibilities. Perhaps the very essence of love is that it arises between persons whose mutual contacts call forth most fully the hidden idealizations in each other's character; and it cannot be doubted that the richest and finest life is just that which is responsive to the widest play of human influences, or that the essential process of human living is the bringing into clear consciousness of latent ideals. In reconstructing our fellows, we measure them by our own natures and so come to know ourselves through them. This subtle mutual awakening is what we mean by human influences and it is the great source of the solidarity of mankind.

Essence of love

III

Approach to the difficult question of self-knowledge might seem most natural by way of a consideration of self-consciousness. But self-consciousness is a relatively late and extraneous development of experience. Indeed, except as precipitated in reflection, it is little more than a pervasive flavor, a seasoning, of the simpler conscious processes; it is never strictly a state of mind but rather a way of accepting experience—a prejudice of the idiosyncratic personality, one might say.

Self-consciousness

It is, then, not in self-consciousness, but in the more primitive experience, within which this arises that clues to the self's nature must be sought. Now the immediate and striking impression of this primitive experience is of extreme fragmentariness and

localness. Perceptions, feelings, thoughts, are all broken and ephemeral. They come as scant touches of fact, hints of reality which it is ours to fill out or interpret as need or facility may incline. Our most concrete sensations are nine-tenths inference and the vast majority of our psychical haps, could they be disentangled from the general texture, would be found too gossamer to serve any tug of experience. Only their multitudinousness enables the general impression, their incessant variegation producing the "mental play" which forms the color-tone of our conscious life. The individual tingles and swelters, the flickers and glares and buzzes and hums, the flutters of anticipation, the dumpish discontents, all the stresses and balks in the awful business of thinking—these are but the hurrysome bubbles of reality, and it is only by dint of their mutual accelerations, turn by turn boosting one another into the focus, that we give due heed to each, and so perform the material obligations of life.

Primary experience

Such ephemera are perforce concerned mostly with temporary interests—bodily stokerage, mental jockeyings, adjustments, preliminaries, conveniencies. Environment exacts from us a deal of mental clutter just to remind us that we live in a social world, and doubtless there is educational value in the experience so urged forth; it furnishes material ballast and steadies us in our general trend. But it is not the experience we live for. It is too utterly transient to point any permanent, motivating interest. Such interests come rarely to the surface. Nature is infinitely deliberate, infinitely tentative, in her procedures; there are no blind rushes to the

Ephemeral interests

goal, but the exhaustless preparation of one who can abide unmeasured time. It is matter of little wonder, then, if the telling experiences of human life come only at spacious intervals, seldom at our behest and never at our command to hold. They are wild, free instants, vouchsafed rather than chosen.

Rare moments

The significant fact is that we live not for the routine but for the rare moment. The proof, curiously enough, is seldom interbound in the exceptional experience itself. We have too little active discrimination or a too strong prepossession for 'affairs' to be quick and adept in recognizing what is of vital significance for ourselves. But time is test and temperer. It is their relative permanence which concretes for us what we call 'things,' physical objects; it is what turns out to be that we name truth; and it is his living past which makes the reality and limns the contour of each human character.

Natural selection of experience

Eventually this character makes itself known by the nature and harmony of the experiences which it has assimilated. We cannot predict what we are going to remember or what we are going to profit by; but after a course of years we find that there has taken place a selection and interweaving of certain past events which has built up for us a background of definite feeling and predilection. This is symbolized to the mind by the memory-series most spontaneously owned,—for the memory by the fact of preservation gives evidence of the original impressiveness of that which it records, while at the same time, by the transmutation it invariably suffers, its warp or bias, it becomes a symbol of the

personal equation and a gauge of inner growth.

Memory portraits

But rarely or never is the memory portraiture vividly complete. We have 'on tap' very little accurate knowledge of ourselves. We are continually discovering unsuspected whims and bents and knacks; perhaps the fundamental zest of life lies just in this element of self-surprise, learning what we are in finding out what we can do. I presume the fullest and fairest internal account should be the experience traditionally ascribed to the drowning man—a sort of bioscopic review of his past in prestissimo time. Yet it should be noted that the mere succession of salient scenes is not in itself significant. The scenes are but symbolism of the character which has chosen them, and before there can be real self-understanding there must be an internal criticism, an appreciation, analogous to our critical appreciations of an artist's work. What memory preserves for us are selections, sketches, adumbrations, of experiences, the unique elements being set forth with that proper exaggeration which is the artist's licence. Hence, meanings appear that were quite unrecognized at the moment of experience, indicating some happy concord of the event with the hidden impulsions of our nature.

Childhood dreams

It is perhaps worthy of by-remark that among the remembered facts many are the mintage of dreams, that (at least for early childhood) the dreamworld has in large part been the real world. This fact may have reason: the comparative freedom from busybody sensation which in the dream state allows sharper and deeper impression of what is to be meaningful. The dream gives free rein to the hidden, creative motive, enabling it to present

experience in a form more appropriate to its design than could be by mere emphasis of the run of affairs.

The inner genius

So the notable trait of the time-fabricated mind is that it has its own peculiar way of looking at things. It is formed by a synthesis of select experiences, each having some special accord with the anticipated scheme or mode which is to be its way of thinking. Eventually all that it entertains becomes overcast with the glamour of its peculiar nature, and forms an assemblage of symbols of our proper selves, so that we can say of a style of thought, "That is mine, my view, my artistry." The foundation of the individual human character is thus an inner and instinctive shaper of the man's perceptions and tastes, a formative principle or force which is the very essence of himself,—though by a strange and paradoxical necessity of nature it seems rather to be some inner genius or familiar, half alien, half shadow.

Character auto-biographic

The paradox is, of course, the paradox of that inward lie, self-consciousness. Consciousness in its ordinary processes is a temporizing between character and environment; its concernments are with trivialities, temporary interests. Character, so far as realized, is a kind of autobiography, a synthetic selection from the life-history as preserved in memory. But in all this there is no self-consciousness: self-consciousness is not needed for mere experience, and so far from being a part of the memory-experience, the latter is rather its object and its antithesis. Self-consciousness, in fact, is a confessed untruth: it is not an awareness of the self, but of a kind of relation subsisting between the self and its objects. Primarily it arises as a

sense of antagonism between the achieved and the sought experience, between the wish of the true self and the will of the environment. It is a setting of actual against ideal experience, and in its bitterest concentration a condemnation of the actual for the sake of the ideal. It is the recognition of the existence of a true self to which we are not and can never be quite true, and it comes into keen being as the surface moil of the inner conflict. The "I" that it proclaims is a contentious, dissatisfied "I," setting up inward deficiencies against uncompromising outward fact, milled betwixt inner weakness and outer perversities, and pleading of its Ideal relief from its painful bondage to a foreign reality.

The ego

What I believe to be my earliest memory is of a sultry summer day in a room where a brother and sister were at play while I sat withdrawn on a bench at the window. A white china dish with a bar of yellow soap was on the window-sill, and the panes were covered with moisture so that the sun shone through yellowed and sicklied. I remember gazing curiously at the soiled gingham dress I wore, at the stocking crumpled down over the shoe. A strange irrational loneliness had laid hold on me, and the ugliness of the soap, the distressful yellow sun, the incomprehensible self in the incomprehensible gingham dress, all gradually merged into a vague and desolate wonder, how I could be I, so helplessly small in the midst of a big unmindful world. It was the utter forlornness which only childhood knows, and which comes in childhood never again with the keenness of that first moment in which is felt the frailty of the puny self set to follow its solitary way.

Birth of self-consciousness

Self-consciousness never quite overcomes this first childish bewilderment. In fact, it never becomes a real understanding of the self. It is always a restricted, local, emotional self-regard, colored by present awkwardness, irritated by vanities rebuked, piqued by Nature's indifferences. If, for the nonce, it be assumed at the behest of a cold intention, while we resort to deliberate self-survey, it loses its natural warmth and prick and becomes a mere fiction. The reflective self-consciousness of the psychologist is nothing less than the mind out of focus; it is a state only to be attained by disciplinary nurturings, to be held only by solemn coddlings, and its ostensible character—subjective distorted into objective—is a contradiction in terms.

Its bewilderment

Yet for all its stilted nature, self-consciousness is perhaps the most significant of our inner tokens. It is significant not as an intelligent apprehension of the self but for the fact of apprehension. The very fact that it feels a grievance with manifest Nature makes it indicative of an experience more inclusive than any which present reality knows; it implies, that is, the whole man.

Self-consciousness must not be mistaken for self-knowledge. Common experience teaches this well enough, yet the empirical plausibility of the self-conscious state constitutes a formidable bias. A Napoleon's cool consciousness of his own ambitions, his own powers, is bound to seem to him a fair measure of himself. But the real measure can be given only in the historical portrait got by scientifically deducting the accidents due to environment and so showing what of the world's addition went to his making. Doubtless Napoleon's contained

Self-knowledge

Napoleon

self-perception was to him a true token: it actually designated a real and capable self. Yet it was not knowledge of that self. Its function was locally dynamic; to impel to the confident career. But even so it was symptomatic of a condition or power in the world, *Napoleonhood,* which, when from his making the world's share is deducted, is the residual truth of the Napoleonic self.

For our purposes, this symptomatic character of self-consciousness is its central interest. Even where it does not define, it unequivocally points the fact of a persistent and dominant 'control' in human nature, forming the core of human personality.

IV

Summary

Let us take stock of progress. We have seen that men judge of one another, first, the fact of consciousnesses other than their own, and, second, the fact of characters dominating these consciousnesses by an inner and profound control. We have seen, again, how within his own conscious experience a man is made aware of the existence of its control, *his* character; first, by the selective synthesis of his memories built into a symbolism of the ego; and, secondly, by self-consciousness, which is significant as the sign of a process of adjustment of the inner character to the outer circumstance, and hence as a token of the verity of the inner being.

Now I wish to be as direct as possible. The facts are: (1) A consciousness. (2) A life-history more or less fully reflected in the conscious life. (3) A 'control'—be it force or factor—making the consciousness what it is from moment to moment and moulding the life-history to the unity and consist-

ency that enables us to give it a personal name.

The soul

The bald question follows: Is this 'control' a real agent, an elemental being holding the hegemony of man's constitution? or is it a physical force, or a sporadic eddy of forces, in the inclusive mechanism of Nature? Have we to do with a soul in the old Scholastic sense of the word, an *ens spirituale?* or are we merely concerned with the subtle involutions of some yet undiscovered 'organic ray'?

Fortunately the question requires no *a priori* pros and cons. Though Hume and Kant have demonstrated that we can think without explicit reference to a thinking agent, they have not made the conception of such an agent irrational and they are far from having given any explanation of the actual generation of thought; the soul has become empirically unnecessary, perhaps, but not irrational nor unphilosophical. As for a physics of human personality, if it exist at all it is rather as an arrogation of the scientific consciousness than as an hypothesis of scientific thought.

Belief in souls

We have here no call for metaphysical discussion. The question is primarily an evidential one, and on this count it is instructive merely that its asking is reasonable. Its mere intelligibility implies some empirical evidence for the truth of its suppositions; they are at least thinkable of reality. Further, the conception of the soul must have some sort of bionomic significance for the human species in the order of Nature. It plays a long rôle in the story of our mental evolution and it is not credible (from what we know of Nature, from the inner principles of reason itself) that a conception with so significant a history could have arisen without a real ground

in man's constitution. We have in part seen what that ground is: the consistency of human conduct and the individuality of human thought and perception; but we have as yet no inkling of what must be the essential character of the soul—spiritual or material, conscious or physical,—and it remains to be seen if its conscious manifestations are ever such as to give real clues to this character.

The portrait of any given man at any given time depicting just his displayed mental and physical traits could never be an adequate portrait. John Doe, here and now, is much more than his body and his thoughts. He is more even than these plus his past, his history. Indeed, his primary significance is not in all this; his primary significance is the series of possible actions and thoughts which he represents, his potentialities. These potentialities may, for aught we know, be historically unreal; they may represent no actual conduct destined to take place; John Doe may die next moment. Nevertheless, we cannot think him without them; we cannot think him as not being them; they are a part of what he is for us in his estate as man.

John Doe's potentialities

An instinct is an elementary example of such potentialities. An instinct is described as a predisposition to act in a certain way in a given narrowly determined situation; it is never an actual event until the situation occurs. Yet we doubt the reality of instincts no more than we doubt the reality of physical laws; they are part of what we are bound to count on in estimating John Doe; they are essential features of his human entelechy, and like all possibilities, represent qualities which we cannot help judging to have a foundation of current reality even

though it be not now, and may never be, called into manifest play. No man—in this world, at least—ever exhausts his possibilities. Each human life develops as its accidents permit, and we, judging the man, give him credit for powers which a happier fortune might have called forth. We form our conception of him *sub specie æternitatis,* realizing that the haps and issues of a lifetime are all too meager to give his adequate measure.

Human nature

'Human nature' as a category of our thinking means to us that man's self as a real factor in the world is potentially greater than its current history. In other words, Nature has exceeded the exigencies of his destined career and has made him better than his opportunities. This truth is the key to our whole social consciousness, and it is the basis of all intercourse between man and man. It is the rationale of human progress and the ground of human freedom. In our mental life it is evidenced by the endless series of ideal constructions—imaginings, schemes, plans, hypotheses—which form the prefaces of our actions. In our natures, as they develop, it is represented by the evolutional *motifs* which they reveal, the actualities of today being conceivable only as the expression of some impulse or power latent in time past. Aristotle was the first great evolutionist, for he proclaimed that no being is bounded by its present display, its actuality; its essential nature is rather a form which now and here it only partially embodies; its essential nature includes its potential being, and without reckoning potentialties as real, evolution is nonsense.

Aristotle an evolutionist

We have, then, already a partial clue to the character of man's hidden self: It must be an ideal,

The hidden self

form-giving character; it must represent life-motive and hold a kind of balance of power as between events, so yielding what we call freedom of choice; it must be made up of anticipations of experience held as in perpetual leash for the possible occasion of their realization. A man's soul cannot be less than the sum of his capabilities, and since these are invariably deduced from their partial display in the conduct which aims to realize them, it is hardly thinkable that the soul can be other in kind than a fuller, inner realization,—that is, its nature must be an extension of our own idealizing consciousness. But we are not to rest here. Another set of facts gives evidence to the same conclusion.

Lying at the very heart of man's capable life are those spontaneities of thought and imagination expressed to consciousness in what I called heretofore the mind's individual artistry. Even the simplest mental processes betray this artistry. It appears in perception in the wilfulness of our points of view; no two people see the same thing in the same light, for the light is an inner, individual illumination. It appears again in thinking. 'Association of ideas' has long been a key phrase in descriptions of mental phenomena, but it explains nothing; it merely narrates the fact that consciousness passively views series of selected ideas presented to it. The significant point is that ideas are 'selected' as if by conscious will yet not in consciousness; they are selected according to rationality and relevancy yet by no conscious reasoning. Here is the action of a proper intelligence which yet does not appear. The supreme aid comes from the mind's hidden part: there is a state of puzzle, a *mélange* of tugs

Association of ideas

and tags, doubts and debates, and then the unannounced precipitate solution. A state of insight springs from some power of thought more clear-sighted, less annoyed by obtrusive sensation, than are ordinary speciously conscious powers. Here again we have evidence of the enlargement of mind beyond its conscious bounds. Insight

But the most palpable case of the intervention of the subconscious is in imagination. Imaginative creations are so utterly spontaneous and individual, so fraught with self-surprise, so masterful of other mental forms, that we ascribe them almost as matter-of-course to the workings of some hidden inspiration. They are not the gift of outer but of inner nature, and their beauty is wholly or largely due to our recognition in them of this inner nature; it is the divine impress of the creative personality. The inception of the imaginative act is the 'suggestion,'—an event of anysoever sort which the after-event may own as its antecedent; the suggestion is a cue to the imaginative creation, but it has in itself no dynamic power. It is laid hold of by the imagination, it is vitalized, metamorphosed, and bye and bye appears the creation,—perhaps a half-caught wonder-form rousing to pursuit, perhaps the coronate beauty. Between the suggestion and the achievement there is a lacuna: a period of incubation, transformation, creative craftsmanship, inner growth—call it what we may, the essential fact is a great change wrought in darkness and in a mode no man previsaged. Somewhere within the personality of man is a hidden power capable of recognizing in suggestions their possibilities and of moulding them to its own peculiar style and intent. Plato called Imagination

Suggestion

this the Idea, and we have not yet reached a philosophical surety that can enable us to pronounce it other than an ideal force.

Self-portraiture

The potent truth is that the whole of the mind's revelation is a patchwork. Our mental events are like an artist's separate canvases, fragmentary of his whole meaning, and to achieve a fair portraiture we are compelled to fill in innumerable gaps, till our restorations outbalance the verity. Just as in the perception of a tree we ideally reconstruct the major portion of what seems to be given by sense, so do we reconstruct a man's soul (be it our own or another's); and just as our completion of the tree is with physical qualities, so do we supplement what we perceive of the man with spiritual qualities.

V

Primitive spiritism

No fact in mental history is better attested than the naturalness of man's recognition of the supplementary part of his being. Primitive folk display a multitude of odd beliefs about the soul indicating its independence, in will, in act, or in presence, of the familiar body and mind to which it belongs. The Melanesian believes himself able to extract his 'life' by sufficiently powerful magic, and by concealing it from his enemies, so to protect his body from harm. The old Egyptian was assured that the *Ka,* the 'life,' dwells beside the mummy through the uncounted years in which it awaits the summons to again enter and reanimate the body. Teutonic peoples are far from alone in their belief in a *Doppelgänger* executing unawares man's spiritual missions. And the Roman's cult of his *Genius,* dominating his life as a sort of personal deity, finds an analogue

in the *Fravashi* of the Persian, his representative "in the presence of Ormazd."

Such conceptions unmistakably denote man's instinctive belief in a supplementary self, fulfilling the inadequacies of the known self, operating in a freer sphere than that to which he feels himself restricted, and enduring beyond the limits of his mortality. And however crude and absurd their content, these beliefs must have their *raison d'être* in the inner constitution of man's nature. They must answer to some human need, and it is no far inference to find that need in man's keen realization of the mysteriousness of his own manifest being. Implications

Perhaps the psychical significance attached to the 'control' self is best shown in beliefs about inspiration. In primitive conception inspiration is a god's taking hold of a man's soul for the purpose of uplifting and magnifying it: to give it vision, insight, ecstasy. Even so low a race as the Australian blacks believe in the divine afflatus, the god "singing in the breast" of sorcerer and poet, and the secret of nine-tenths of the shamanism and witchery of the barbarians is their reverent belief in the actuality of spiritual enlargement when, at sacred intervals, a Nature more potent than man's makes his life its epiphany. The Biblical gifts of tongues and prophecy, the 'enthusiasm' of Orphics and Dionysiacs, the trance-vision of the Neo-Platonists, the ecstasies of the mystics—all aver the same fundamental faith, found in all ages and religions. Enthusiasm

Poetic insight is the most universal form of this experience. All men have their seasons of poesy, and though the imaginative glow come but rarely, there is in it an unmistakable conviction of a higher

power than any the will commands. Hence mankind has come generally to believe in a kind of ulterior validity of poetic expression, as arising from a hidden and efficient knowledge, while to those gifted in poetic power a 'genius,' or inspirational being, is ascribed, which the possessors themselves are not expected to understand.

Poetic pantheism

Citings of chapter and verse in the case of such unanalyzable phenomena can have only illustrative value; yet we cannot properly estimate the biotic meaning of faith in inspiration without observation of the concrete beliefs in which it issues. And of these, for our purpose, two are especially instructive. The one is poetic pantheism—that exuberant fullness of the imagination which finds naught too paltry or too awesome to be alien to its sympathies, which defies, or perhaps fails to conceive, self-limitation, and is capable of contentment only in swift and eager appropriation, all Nature in its thrall. This poetic pantheism, though found in many moods and expressed in many literatures, is above all typical of the Celtic bards. In the oldest of Irish lyrics Amergin sings:

Song of Amergin

I am the wind that blows upon the sea,
I am the ocean wave.
I am the murmur of the surges,
I am seven battalions,
I am a strong bull,
I am an eagle on a rock,
I am a ray of the sun,
I am the most beautiful of herbs,
I am a courageous wild boar,
I am a salmon in the water,
I am a lake upon a plain,
I am a cunning artist,
I am a gigantic, sword-wielding champion,
I can shift my shape like a god.

And the Cymric Taliesin proclaims:

Taliesin

> I have been in many shapes before I attained a congenial form. I have been a narrow blade of a sword, a drop in the air, a word in a book, a book in the beginning, a light in a lantern, a boat on the sea, a director in a battle, a sword in the hand, a shield in fight, the string of a harp; I have been enchanted for a year in the foam of water. There is nothing which I have not been.

So also Ossian and Anewin and Llywarch Hen—in each the same buoyant conviction of the singer's ubiquity, the same indomitable expansiveness of soul. If we find a flavor of magniloquence in this vasty mood, it is perhaps because the mood itself is so difficult for us, educated in the awe of the world, to achieve. So when we see it modernized in Walt Whitman it seems like a kind of spiritual boastfulness—nothing Pharasaical, but indecorus exaggeration. There is something presumptuous in the outspoken assertion of man's universality; it outleaps our common sureties, though at the same time it responds to a half-acknowledged conviction that the inner truth of human nature is indeed transcendent of the meagre experience humanly vouchsafed.

Walt Whitman

At once in contrast and in harmony with poetic pantheism is a second poetic belief, belief in the soul's pre-existence. It contrasts with the pantheism in its modesty and abashment, its sense of present limitation; it harmonizes in the fact that it, too, is an assertion of the immemorial nobility of man.

Both qualities, the sadness and the exaltation, are in Wordsworth's *Ode on Intimations* and they are in Plato's account of him who beholding an earthly imitation of the divine Beauty feels "some misgiving of a former world steal over him." But

Wordsworth

the mood and the belief are not characteristic of reflective civilization only. Doubtless the pantheism of the bards was a development of the older Celtic notion that the souls of men are come from the magic western Isles thither to return at death, or from the yet more primitive belief in transmigration which has given our nursery tales their shape-shifting wizards and ogres and their princesses horribly enthralled in bestial forms. And across the sea appears the essential idea, just as native and instinctive, among those natural mystics, the American Indians. Peruvian tribes conceived that souls issue, will-o'-the-wisp-like, from a marsh and will there again abide after death until born anew into bodily life, and the more philosophical Aztecs, with a bent toward fatalism, taught that "no one of those born into this world receives his lot here upon earth; rather we bring it with us in being born, for it was assigned to us before the beginning of the world." And so in their baptismal rites the Aztecs express their faith in the soul's high nativity:

Isles of the Dead

Aztec fatalism

> Our pitiful lady, Chalchiuhtlicue, your servant here present is come into this world, hither sent by our father and mother, Ome-tecutli and Ome-ciuatl, who dwell in the ninth heaven. We know not what are the gifts he brings, we know not with what he has been assessed from before the beginnings of the world, nor with what fortune he comes charged. . . . . Behold there is come to earth this little child who is descended whence reside the supreme gods beyond the ninth heaven . . . . sent to us by our father and mother, the celestial gods.

In all such beliefs there is evident an instinctive effort to master the secret of that genius of personality which makes the individual character what it is. They are grounded in the feeling that the haps and events of a life's experience are inadequate to

explain the soul's possessions, and they indicate, as perhaps nothing else, how thoroughly innate is human consciousness of an inner, unrevealed self dominating the apparent life. Their interest is not merely that they are beliefs in the existence of a soul, nor yet that belief in a soul is the most ready and natural account of his own nature that occurs to man, but it lies far more in the fact that they are interpretations of personality, and interpretations which recognize an actuating force beneath the current fact of mind. To what they point should be plain. I cannot repeat too often that the mere existence of a belief requires an explanation, and if it be a belief that has served a large purpose in the development of mind it cannot but represent some sort of fundamental truth of human nature. It must have a ground and reason adequate to its effects. Otherwise all our reasonings would be belied and all our science be worthless.

Grounds of belief in souls

In final characterization, we may say that the force implied as the basis of human personality must have at least the countenance of design; it achieves a consistent and harmonious unity, the individual man's character, and this our highest intelligence cannot represent except as involving its own supreme trait—foresight. Thus reason gives us an intelligent, foreseeing agent, an internal will, as the only conceivable artificer of our lives, such as we find them. The soul (that of which the personality that we encounter forms the living expression) cannot be less in power or reason than the life portrayed and if our common belief in human potentiality is no freakish illusion of nature, if truth is possible, it must be infinitely more.

Intelligence the artificer of life

Self-understanding

The mere fact that this conclusion has had to be sought with some labor ought to carry the correlative that self-understanding is attainable only within narrow limits. I have tried to show why it is that we are often able to comprehend another's character better than our own, as being without the present bias that self-judgment involves; we may be aware of possibilities in ourselves, but we cannot estimate them—perhaps because their scope has in it something of the infinite.

It is worth while to note that here, in self-misunderstanding, as well as in mutual misunderstandings, we have a key to the mood of tragedy. The motive is perhaps more characteristic of Greek than of modern drama, for the Greek drama offered peculiar facilities for its objectification. The self was divided and its segments separately personified —the human, ostensible self as the hapless mortal, the hidden, spiritual self as the regnant god or Nemesis implacable. The soul's unsuspected motives and impulses, with their tendency to seize the reins and drive to madness, were so suited to portrayal as divine powers that even we, long dead to paganism, cannot fail of their awful realism. It is thus that Orestes is pursued by the snaky-armed Erinyes, Cimmerian shades of the social and religious instincts of his ancestors sprung up within him; it is thus that Philoctetes finds his sophistic Greek self in the absurd guise of Heracles, downing manhood and vengeance for politics and prosperity; it is thus, again, that lawless Aphrodite, the ἀφροσύνη of every woman's nature, lays hold on and piteously sacrifices Phædra despite her desperate insight and vain strife.

Greek drama

Orestes

In Phædra the subtlety of Euripides allows her conscious self to see uncloudedly the dread leading of the inner will which yet she is unable to evade. She is a victim of fissured personality: on the one side her understanding, her social instincts, her reason crystal clear, all helpless and hopeless; on the other the indomitable urgency of the dark goddess within. The source of Phædra's wisdom—wisdom void of aid—is her quick sensitivity to the unseen influence. She is keenly aware of the counter-self working her doom and she struggles desperately against the passion it incites. The enigma of human nature is presented for her solution; its issue is life or death; and she, realizing all, attempts it and fails. Her tragedy is doubly tragic by reason of her foresight. It is doubly tragic because doubly human, for foresight, intelligence, is pre-eminently the man-distinctive trait, and we have not yet reached a breadth of sympathy where the heart is not quicker in its susceptibility to human suffering than to any other. **Phædra**

Even the morally blind, at the supreme moment, must have his instant of clairvoyance, of humanity, if his death is to be truly tragical. So Webster makes Bosola not too black a villain to die wisely aware of his own lost possibilities:

O, I am gone!
We are only like dead walls or vaulted graves,
That, ruined, yield no echo. Fare you well.
It may be pain, but no harm, for me to die
In so good a quarrel. O, this gloomy world!
In what shadow, or deep pit of darkness,
Doth womanish and fearful mankind live!
Let worthy minds ne'er stagger in distrust
To suffer death or shame for what is just:
Mine is another voyage. *Duchess of Malfy*

Were Bosola the mere unenlightened murderer, one could have no more than a gallows-curiosity in his taking off; but when his man's soul comes to the surface, though but for a moment, we feel the tragic awe of death.

Hamlet and Lear

I think that the reason that the tragedy of Hamlet seems more noble than the far more terrible and pathetic tragedy of Lear lies in this self-same source; Lear's impulses and emotions are of an elemental and instinctive kind, the kind we call 'natural' and share with the lower animals; Hamlet's intensest living is in his reflective consciousness, the supreme badge of the human estate. Nor am I sure that the tremendous appeal of the Christ-life to mankind is not greatly due to the preternatural, the divine foresight of the Man of Sorrows.

Enlightenment, then, is at the heart of tragedy. It is man's consciousness of his coming end, not the pain that he suffers, that makes human death more terrible than that of the brute. This consciousness implies in him a power of conceptional creation—the thinking that his life *might* continue, *might* yet alter the world in ways which death forestays—that is distinctive of his spiritual nature and so far as we know is a fact anomalous in Nature. If death indeed were all, it would seem as though Nature should have provided that no man could conceive the order of the world to be such that he should not die when and as the fact eventuates; he should be satisfied with his life's end, knowing no other possibility and dreaming no will save the natural law. This, I say, should be if man's aspiration for a bettered and bettering existence be meaningless in Nature's plan; but if the evolution of human con-

The heart of tragedy

sciousness is a factor of the world's rationality and essential constitution, then must this aspiration be of real significance and find a real satisfaction in the order of Nature.

Other-world consciousness

Probably the most elusive and certainly the most indescribable of all human experiences are those tensions of consciousness wherein one is beset with the sense of an encompassing 'other-world,' nearer than sight or touch yet passing man's powers to enter in. Often there is the poignant realization of its nearness, yearnings for its glories and quietings, as one yearns for the glory and quiet of the still, bright stars. And there is eager anticipation, as for the fulfillment of ancient Messianic prophecies, and there is pride of kingly power—the new-crowned monarch entering in triumph into his heritage. Yet ever, even on the verge, the keys of all mysteries in hand, in the ache of present wonder, in the awe of revelation, there comes the dumb-deadening pain, the helpless swing back to the world of matter-of-fact. And the heart is as the heart of the prodigal turned from the ancient door, and life becomes one long *Wanderjahr* wherethrough the exile takes his wistful way in ceaseless search of the lost portal to his kingdom.

Anamnesis

"I have been in many shapes," sings Taliesin, "before I attained a congenial form." And we—are we not beset with strange familiarities, with misty recollections, with recognitions which yet are dreams, with unpremeditated knowings and unremembered wisdoms, presages and prophecies whose fulfillments betray the unguessed archetypes of our lives? There is a richness and power and majesty in the world which unseeing we feel and

untaught we know, and our only clues to the source of this assurance are those moments of promise when we divine something of the marvel of that spiritual vision whose revealed glory is yet denied us for these mortal days.

VI

Body and mind

And now I must digress to what is certainly the most difficult puzzle known to man—the problem of the relation of body and mind. The intimacy of the physical and the spiritual in the life we know is such that it is very difficult for us to separate them even in conception, and the fact of this intimacy is the most ordinary and cogent obstacle to belief in a spiritual survival of bodily death. That the inner nature of the body-mind relation can ever be laid bare to human understanding is far from probable: the phenomenon is too close to the life-principle. But it is not altogether chimerical to expect light on the less transcendental, though to us far more significant question of the body-dependence or -independence of the spirit. Indeed, the progress of science is such that we are already in possession of many of the essential truths.

Death

Death derives a certain spectacular quality from the soul-bereft body which is its outward token and bequeathment; and there can be little doubt that it was the presence of the corpse and the need for its disposal which first impressed upon the dawning human intelligence the mysteriousness of man's constitution. Animals view the dead of their kind with indifference, curiosity, or revulsive terror, but man, from an immemorial antiquity, has resorted to the most laborious devices for the preservation

and honoring of the bodies of his fellows. Tombs are the most ancient of human edifices, and sepulture is by far the most significant of all primitive human customs. The practice of sepulture implies a creature gifted with reflection and capable of some ideal analysis of his own nature—one who has come to recognize in the bodily husk the terribleness of its fall, and, in order to supply the loss, dimly re-creates for it an animating soul.

Sepulture

To be sure, man is slow in dissociating the spirit from its bodily dependence; the conception of a disembodied life is at first beyond his powers. The hutless Australian black bearing with him in his wanderings the bones of his kindred, sometimes for years, and the cultured Egyptian garlanding the ancestral mummies at his feasts, alike show this primitive inability, while the mere fact of sepulture betrays at least a belief in the eventual restoration of the communion of soul and body. But though the spiritual and material be thus blurred in conception, in instinct there is none the less profoundly discerned the fact that the human reality includes a life, a person, which gives significance to the body rather than derives meaning from it. And herein is already forecast the idea of spiritual being.

Corpse and Mummy

The evolution of this idea shows, *pari passu,* the slow coming into consciousness of the problem of body and mind. The primary contrast of living body and corpse is one that seems to call for crude subtraction, and it is only natural that the earliest attempts yield a conception of the soul, or 'life,' that is purely physical. Thus we have the elementary identification of the soul with the blood,—that blood which yet in Homeric thought must be lapped

by the meagre ghosts ere they can find strength and speech, and which with us today is still the 'life blood.' Or again, the soul is the breath, the 'breath of life' (ψυχή, πνεῦμα, *spiritus, anima*), which the Romans deemed it a sacred duty to catch with their lips from the lips of a dying kinsman; or it is the not less physical shadow, the 'shade' (σκία, *umbra*), the possession of which marked Dante in Purgatory as a living man among the dead.

Breath of life

From conceptions such as these the transition is imperceptible to the notion, most widespread of all, that the soul is a sort of unsubstantial replica of the body (εἴδωλον, *simulacrum*), usually a miniature, a manikin. Yet this transition marks a clearer realization of the soul's relation to the body; the soul is no longer an attribute, but a double of the physical self, to which it is united by the magic bond of resemblance, so that what the soul suffers, the body suffers, what mutilates the body, mutilates the soul. Among the ghosts that flocked about the trench where Odysseus ran the blood of the sacrificed ram were phantoms of "battle-slain men, wounded by brazen spears, girt in their bloody mail"; the ghosts of our own time go clanking with them the dismal symbols of their taking off, each in the crippled, bloody or headless plight which marked his body's last estate; and there is a pathetic story of the West Indies that when the slaves began to resort to suicide to escape their miseries, the masters mutilated the dead bodies, thus, through fear of a mutilated life in the world to come, stalling the survivors from imitating their comrades.

Idolon

Ghost

Thus the distinction of soul and body began to be felt,—their relation being explained, as were all

natural reactions, by the magic of mimicry. But as yet there was little notion of spiritual agency; the physical force of the living body was the only agency primarily appreciated and this was not analyzed. It was the fact of death that first determined the conception of the soul, whose being was accordingly framed wan and feeble as the proper complement of the nerveless body. Hence Homer's description of the dwellers in Hades, εἴδωλα καμόντων, "eidola of outworn men"; and hence, doubtless, the odd attitude of the living man toward his own soul—as if 'twere somewhat half foreign, a mere baggage, a hanger-on, a nurseling of his body,—an attitude which may in part explain the common belief in the diminutiveness of the soul, and which finds an almost ludicrous expression in the patronizing address of the dying Hadrian to his own spirit:

Hades

> Animula vagula, blandula,
> hospes comesque corporis,
> quae nunc abibis in loca
> pallidula, rigida, nudula,
> nec, ut soles, dabis jocos?

Hadrian to his soul

To philosophers, and before all to Plato whose influence in the conception is still potent, we must turn for a realization of the meaning, power, and individuality of spiritual agency. Plato's theory possesses striking analogy to the primitive notion of mimicry as causal force. He believed the soul to be an Idea or mode of the Divine Mind which operates, as all Ideas, by inspiring in brute physical being the desire and emulation of its divine perfections: the body imitates so far as its mortal nature permits the beauties of its spiritual pattern. In this

The body an image

view there is a startling truth to the facts of life—volition being so largely a matter of the physical exercise, its end and designings so entirely ideal,—and it is therefore of little wonder that it so long satisfied the requirements of growing reflection. Indeed, its truth stands today an essential truth of human nature. At the same time, for a way of thinking conditioned by mechanical conceptions, it gives a too mythical account of the *modus operandi:* it does not fit in with the common notions of causation, and it leaves the critical intelligence still restless as to how soul and body, mutually independent, can interoperate.

Descartes on the soul

The question has never really been answered except by metaphors. The body is the 'house of clay,' the 'tenement,' of the soul, or, in the less felt figure of our physiologies, the brain is the 'seat' of our consciousness. Even Descartes' famous theory, that the soul is a dimensionless entity stationed in the pineal gland by the infinitesimal motions of which it deflects the animal spirits this way and that, is but a variant of this figure of the 'seat,' which, on the whole, is more satisfying to the modern mind than the competitive simile, that the "brain secretes consciousness as the liver secretes bile," or that consciousness is an 'epiphenomenon' of the body.

Yet, though they explain nothing, there is a certain gain in these metaphors. They narrow the problem and give more explicit terms. With 'soul,' or 'mind,' and 'body' it is hard to avoid playing fast and loose; with 'brain' and 'consciousness' we must at least be aware when we are offering and when avoiding a solution. So far as actual knowledge of the inner relation of body and mind

Empedocles

is concerned we are no whit beyond Empedocles who held that objects give off effluvia which pass through the organs of sense and impress themselves upon the soul, but we are very far beyond this in our understanding of the issues involved; we have rid ourselves of distressing ambiguities and drawn a clear line between causal fact and thought convention.

Physiological psychology

The whole science of physiological psychology rests on the generalization that every alteration of consciousness is the direct accompaniment of brain activity, but it makes no pretense of explaining these mutual changes. Affirmation of the parallelism of mind and brain events is in no wise affirmation of their identity nor even of their causal dependence. To say that a salt whiff of the sea accompanies a tremor of olfactory nerve-cells is not to pronounce as same what our words discriminate: the sensation is one thing, the nerve-change another; and could we (as it seems eminently plausible that some day we may) match every distinguishable conscious state with a parallel brain state, the sum of the brain-states could be no more than a vastly interesting symbolism of the mind. It would form a kind of chart or algebra of mental history and it would have the same sort of value that any accurate chart or competent formula possesses. Certainly it would be keenly useful—provided we command the proper stimulus—to know that whenever neuron x tingles neuron y a prick o' the conscience must rouse to right action; but we cannot dream, thereby, to have hit upon a ground for defining the nerve-change as a form of compunction (which is what a materialistic view necessitates). What we have ground

for saying is that here is a mechanism, the human body, of enormous importance to conscious life, and bearing such unique relationship to the man-side of the world that, could we grasp it, the clue to man's destiny would be in our hands.

Fallacies of psychologists

It is possible that the solution is of unsuspected simplicity. We need first to rid ourselves of awkward prepossessions: we must fix firmly in mind that the psychologist's parallelistic scheme is only a comfortable convention of his, enabling him to dodge a perplexity which, interesting as it may be to us, is of little moment to his pursuits and purposes. The psychologist carefully equating brain-state and conscious-state is equating real and fictive fact: the brain-state of *X*, which we will suppose he is able to examine, is something he directly *sees; X's* thought, which he parallels with the brain-state, is something he *imagines* only. *X's* mind is to the psychologist what any man's mind must be to any other man, an ideal construction, an imaginary portrait, a fiction of *X's* experience. And it is not by analysis of such a fictive mind but by analysis of a real mind—say, the psychologist's own—that the mind's true nature is to be ascertained. We may learn something of the human body by study of manikins and charts, but for the final fact we must resort to flesh and bone; and so it is with mind.

The real conditions of our quest are hidden as much as revealed by our terminology. 'Consciousness' we treat as if it were a thing among things rather than a name for things collectively in their felt relations to ourselves. Perception of a physical object we term a 'state of consciousness.' We might better say that it is an 'object-consciousness'—an

apple-consciousness, a chair-consciousness—and that as a fact of our individual history the thing has no existence except as perceived-object. In other words what we feel as reality is the mass or series of our perceptions. But what we call truth or true nature is usually something very different; for us it is something wholly ideal, for it is the result of our taking thought upon perception and consciously or unconsciously infilling it with the products of our thinking—as the truth of the tree is the complex of its image and our botanical education.

Consciousness defined

Consciousness, then, is but a name for a certain aspect of experience, the reality or real-seeming aspect. What we call 'thing' is in full 'thing-consciousness'; what we call a 'truth' is 'thought-consciousness' or 'idea.' Things we recognize as making up the substance of our actual world; truths are vicarious things, symbols of actualities we do not directly know. If we are to be true to experience we must get rid of the notion that 'conscious' and 'bodily' represent the same sort of duality as 'physical' and 'spiritual.' Conscious experience embraces both physical and spiritual elements and with the same sort of immediacy, and our only interest is to inquire whether the spiritual elements give a greater promise of permanency than the physical.

One's hand

I think the point may be brought home by considering a single member of the body, say the hand. One's hand at rest upon the chair-arm seems curiously disjunct from the self: its contact with the cool wood is impersonal and objective, in fact it is almost as much a part of the not-self world as is the wood; like the kitten's tail, the intimacy of its peculiar attachment to one's experience is only dis-

The "seat" of consciousness

tantly felt. But quite different is the same hand in action. The active hand is a consciously directed tool. It is become a part of one's self in a more cordial relation; though yet not essential to one's sense of being, it is distinctly a part of one's contact with objects—sharing their qualities through touch, and, through muscular effort, imparting new qualities. The active hand is a tool or agent of one's intention; it is that part of reality *where change is actually being wrought* in the carrying out of this intention.

The italics give the important point: we have body-consciousness where change is being wrought —either actively, when we mould environment, or passively, when environment impresses itself upon us. We have body-consciousness, to put the case otherwise, just where we should expect from biophysical reasons to find it, where its warnings and directions should be of most avail. Commonly we have but a vague apprehension of the body as a whole; two or three centers of friction are about all that we can heed at once. But for physical purposes—bodily preservation, nourishment, propulsion—these are all that are necessary. Nature has accommodatingly specialized certain portions of the physical mechanism, the sense-organs, for the sole sake of keeping us in touch with reality at the salient frictive points. The outparts of the machine are the only parts of which we need to be actively conscious for practical guidance, and but for occasional danger signals we are left comfortably oblivious of the automatic inner mechanism.

Nature's economies

I give this commonplace with emphasis because it seems to answer directly the otherwise natural

The body a machine

question of why we have not consciousness of the intra-bodily mechanism. The body as a whole works automatically; it is a perfect machine and there is no need for consciousness of its operations except at those points where adaptation involves choice, where it might go wrong but for the control of reason. Our physical organisms act physically upon a physical world, altering and being altered by that world. They produce and reflect a current physical personality, the visible, substantial man, the man who wears clothes and can be photographed. There is every reason, biologically speaking, why, if the physical body is to be (what in fact it is) a real agency in the world, its conscious control should be concentrated upon its direct contacts with environment, its handlings, seeings, hearings. There is no biological reason why its internal processes should be other than automatic and unconscious.

Tool of the mind

Body-consciousness, then, is the immediate token of man's independent physical action, or, otherwise put, the body is the tool of the evolving mind. So far as any individual is concerned, his own body has no existence or meaning except as the instrument or center of his contacts with Nature—that is, with what he feels to be other than himself; his body exists for him merely as the form through which he must realize (to the extent permitted) that inner design or life-unity which he feels to be his *raison d'être* and vaguely terms his 'better self.' As for another's body, this exists, first, as one among the physical facts which make up the contactual- or thing-consciousness of the individual; that is to say, it is a perception-fact, significant just as being perceived; and it exists, secondly, as the

outer expression and vehicle of a personality ideally symbolized under the spur of imaginative insight: even under the forceps and scalpel of the dissector the body is nothing except it be the presentment of an ideal physical nature or the symbol of a human consciousness. However it be considered, the body represents a purpose to which mind is the key.

Evolution of body and mind

In turning to natural evolution for an explanation of this purposiveness of conscious being, we are giving up immediate experience for inference. The evolution of body and mind is an historical, hence an inferred fact. It is based upon critical judgments of evidence and its final test must be the rationality which we feel our inferences to possess. I preface thus that the reader may take me as understanding that what I offer by way of reason is mere hypothesis, supported by evidence to be sure, but no proven case.

The body, then, is a naturally evolved machine. But mere mechanism (as heretofore urged) is a partial and irrational conception having in it something of the monstrous; mechanism has meaning only in connection with a use or purpose of the machine. The body-machine in the order of Nature is unthinkable as not working to some end; that is, we must find some rational satisfaction in the contemplation of the body's work, and this (may we not affirm it?) can only lie in the manifest trend of that work the immediate exemplification of which is consciousness while its ideal design is the wrought personality.

Sufficient reason of consciousness

That immediate consciousness should comprise so much clutter and flurry and work-a-day weariness,

so little of the ideally satisfying, may at first view seem a denial of any ideal end; but against such haste we should reflect that Nature has endless time to work her will and again that our bodily life must needs be fitted to its environmental necessities. Why we may not know, but physical reactions, pains and pleasures alike, are the telling factors of our present discipline. And while we are living the life of Nature it is not to be supposed that the meaning of a complicated and lasting life-scheme can be continuously present in its moments.

Human experience and Nature's ends

The wonder is, perhaps, that we have so much insight into the ideal character of the world, into what we term its truth. If Nature be viewed as an agency for the development of ideal types, of which the human is one, it cannot be expected that the developing creature should know its destined end from the beginning nor that its consciousness should develop through other than immediate needs. It is only by slow gains that a little ideal insight is achieved, the hard-won privilege of æons of blind endeavor.

But if the body thus incarnates a life which indefinitely transcends its present show, it yet remains to ask whether the transcendent life may have other incarnations than this by which we know ourselves? whether there can be experience apart from brain-mechanism? and whether it can include a sense of personality?

The question has been implicitly answered in our estimate of the function of the body and the nature of bodily consciousness. The body is the physical locus of the human person, evolved as the instrument and expression of his conscious life. This

life, in so far as it is sensible merely, is utterly bound down to bodily limitations; it is local, restricted, evanescent. But consciousness is not merely body-conscious; it is not limited to sense elements. It embraces along with this—possibly as a kind of refinement of the sensible elements—certain ideal elements whose whole point is their transcendence of present bodily needs and informations. They represent the plan and scheme of an understanding, and the *apparent* motive, in the order of Nature, of the discipline which we call human life.

Apparent motive and abiding experience

The burden of my previous discussion has been to show that this apparent motive accounts for itself as reference to a more abiding, fervid, and opulent experience than that of which we commonly have conscious token. This hidden experience is what builds up personality, and more and more, as evolution advances, replaces bodily by ideal manifestation. In its inner character, it not only is independent of the body, but it is antagonistic to body-consciousness and tends to usurp its place.

An experience apart from the body is thus necessary to explain experience of the body; and it exists, in fact, in what is commonly called subconscious experience. But its evolutional trend is toward an ever fuller conscious manifestation, toward an ever fuller conveyance of a sense of personality, or self-realization. Even within experience as we know it there are rare elements, ideal elements, or mystical, if you will, which are utterly irrelevant to the physical world, and, so far as we can judge, dependent only upon the secret nature of personality. It is surely not borrowing privilege to regard such experiences as prophetic of an estate wherein the

curbed instincts of the spirit shall have freer rein than mortal circumstance allows.

Teleology

The universe, as reason builds it, is an edifice of possibilities; Nature is a moulder of ends. For ourselves, the only foundation of rationality must lie in what we may grasp of Nature's purpose in creating us. This, if it is shown anywhere, is shown in our ever-present sense of evolution and aspiration,—in our dissatisfactions, to put it contrarily. We live unceasingly for the future, be it the coming moment, month or year. So Nature has compelled.

There is but one inference to be drawn from these considerations: either the incompleteness of our mortal, fragmentary life must have for its satisfaction a future answering to our aspirations, either this or man's reason is but a horrible leprosy of the mind. Between spiritual evolution and cosmic madness there is no middle ground. On the one rest all truth and faith; with the other is only delirium and chaos.

The Incarnation

In turning from this theme it may be noted that the view expressed has a bearing upon the incarnation of Christ. It is somewhat difficult to see in the life of Jesus, if he be conceived as always fully conscious of his divinity, the same utter nobility which would be were his consciousness merely human: that is, it is hard to believe that a Divine Mind could be made to suffer from the trivial, which is what human frailty must appear to it. But if the divine nature be viewed as subconscious in Jesus, if it be the moulder of his human life but not its sentience, then the human passion becomes real and intelligible. And surely such must be the case if all bodily life is incarnation—a binding down of the spirit for

present discipline in the terrene environment. And even as the mystery of His, so would the mystery of man's divinity be made intelligible.

VII

Human personality

The conception of human personality which we have gained is, in broad summary, of a center or node of creative energies, individualized and to a certain extent made independent within the whole being of Nature. Outwardly these energies find expression in the physical and perishable body; inwardly they appear as a complexity of thoughts and feelings more or less directly reflecting the body's history, yet assuming an harmonious proportion and betraying an ideal trend which we interpret as character and in which we find the true rationale of bodily life. We have thus a spirit—a concrete intention of Nature—assuming at once a body-experience and an ideal experience, but distinctly intensifying its activities, where lies all its promise, in the ideal. The body resolves into a mere incident of the major development.

Such a conception is inherent ground for belief in the continuance of the personality after the cessation of its body-experience: the whole *raison d'être* lies otherwhere than in the body, in promise of some more adequate fulfillment of the foreshadowed type.

Faith in immortality

And this inherent likelihood is variously reinforced. To begin with, faith in immortality is so natural to man that its realization would seem perforce natural to Nature, while the profound rôle which this faith has played in the evolution of the human mind makes it impossible for us to conceive Nature as

other than blindly monstrous without some satisfaction of the essential *motif* upon which she has contrived humankind. Further, so far as we can discern, man is the most capable of all the lesser delegates of Nature's creative intelligence, and since the alteration of the world in ideal ways is so chiefly with him, it can but be inferred that she has need of his assistance. Surely the need is There, in the realm of his promise, far more than Here, in his crude apprenticeship.

Man's humility

In all this there is presumption for the continuance after death of the nobler human activities. But over against such presumption must be set a seemingly contrariwise conviction. This is man's sense of his own puny weakness and unworthiness.

Even with savages such conviction is present. There is a kind of wistful pathos in the Tongan belief that immortality pertains only to the better class of men, the chieftain class, while the rout of mankind are doomed to extinction. And from this it is but a step to the widespread primitive notion that the sempiternal estate of the ordinary soul is a wretched and emaciate existence in dismal Sheol or gloomy Hades whence perchance a precarious few, favored of the gods, may be rescued to the bright light of day. Our war-loving Teuton forefathers conceded a Paradise, Valhalla, to the heroic slain. but consigned him of the 'straw-death' together with wife and thrall to sunless Hel; and the no less battle-ready Aztec deemed not only the souls of slain warriors, but those of sacrificed victims, and—odd addition—of women dying in child-birth, worthy a future in the train of glorious Tonatiuh, the Sun, whither the man dead of years or disease might not

Sheol

Valhalla

hope to win. It may even be that our own Heaven and Hell are but moralistic refinements of an ancient belief in selective immortality.

Creator

To a more matured thought the sense of human unworthiness and belittlement becomes accentuated. In the grandiose plan of a World a mere mortal is the most trivial of incidents, toy and occupation of a day of the Creator's plentitude of time: surely it is a pitiful arrogance, the very culmen of impious conceit, to build expectation upon so frail a favor: "What is a man that thou shouldst magnify him and that thou shouldst set thine heart upon him?" The passionate cry of Job finds a curious complement in the frequency in primitive theologies of *fainéant* creators—supreme deities to whom no sacrifice is offered and for whom no rite is performed because they are believed to be too exalted to notice human affairs; such, for example, was Pachacamac, the

Pantheos

Peruvian pantheos, whose name, Garcilasso tells us, was never uttered save with bowed head and reverent gesture, yet to whom no offering was made and no prayer addressed.

In every polytheistic religion is to be seen the same tendency. In the lower hierarchies are departmental or 'familiar' deities directly concerned with the affairs and needs of the individual worshipper. Above these, progressively more withdrawn, are gods dealing with tribal, national or universal affairs, until in dim supremacy is reached

Prime Mover

some far Prime Mover, lone and majestic, and transcendently oblivious of mortal hap or interest.

And not even Christian assurance permits approach to God without humility of spirit: man in himself is neither worthy nor capable of salva-

tion; Divine mercy is the only explanation of Divine concern for him.

Some inheritance of this Christian humility there may be in the abashment which the naturalist professes in the presence of Nature. Certainly the conception of the world as a huge cosmic mill repetitively grinding forth meaningless destinies, which, for the most part, is what science yields, is not one to inspire other feelings than horror and fear: all that the touch of such a Nature can give is a ghastly suggestion of throttled life. As a matter of fact, steady retention of such a conception is impossible; that way madness lies. The human mind is incapable of regarding the world as unimbued with some element of inner mystery, some portion of that apotheosized human nature which we call divinity, and it is before this exaltation of his own kind and his own life that man is abashed. The naturalist's reverence of Nature is his instinctive acknowledgment of Nature's animism.

The cosmic mill

Here, I take it, we come to the pith and point of men's belief in their own unworthiness. The scale in which the worth is estimated is a human scale, and the reason for the condemnatory judgment is not that human nature is so pitiful in its essence but that in this mortal life it is so paltry in its achievement. The fact of what man is is set over against the ideal of what he should be and is found wanting. The dwarfed reality shrivels before the giant possibility.

Scale of values

That one of Nature's facts, local, limited, evanescent, should realize its own limitation and condemn its restricted being for the sake of a

transcendent being—here, surely, is a wonder! Yet only so can we describe man's dissatisfaction with his local importunate physical embodiment as contrasted with that ideal which we term Nature's Truth. For of that Over-being, be it 'God' or 'Nature,' from the mystery and spell of which comes abashment and awe, the very essence is human and personal. When we speak of Nature in the large, the Nature of laws and histories and destinies, we really designate the ideal form of our human intelligence. We mean by it no present physical fact, but our thought of what reality may or must be —that is to say, our conceptual creation.

God or Nature

Nature's universals are our ideals. It should be needless to add that, being so, they are the ultimate measures of our personalities. The human mind creates itself in its discovery of truth, and truth, in turn, is the symbol of the mind's growth and the image of its powers. To adopt Plato's metaphor, human nature 'participates' in the universal Nature, and the form of this participation is truth.

Truth, then, is the measure of man—as is never more evident than in the belittlement of the here-and-now self in presence of our conceptual creations. But we should not lose the correlative axiom: that man is the measure of reality. Nature as a harmony of laws and processes is an ideal creation, the total truth; but truth, participating in humanity, is the reflection of an ideal human nature and intelligence; that is to say, it is the likeness of a personal Mind.

Truth the measure of man

There is and there can be no evasion of our

primitive bent toward personification of natural events and ways. Personification means intelligibility, reduction of the world-riddle to homely and familiar parable, and it is indispensable to all ideal conquest. The whole cast and glamour of reality-in-perspective is of wills and intentions (evolutions, as we say, having in view the external aspects of growing things) whose natures we can only conceive as in man's inner likeness, that is, as personalized.

Personification

But personification is in many degrees. We may say, for instance, that our globe possesses a personality: it develops from youth to age like a living being, runs its gamut of experience, and at last (who knows?) sinks into the cold and dark. At another extreme of time, the sunset—a single golden hour, running a course of its own and dying away with at best but the imaginary promise of a successor. Earth and Evening, each has its ideal image like an indwelling sprite, and in each is death and decay.

Mere personality is not in itself escape from transitoriness. The ideal nature must be more than a map or pattern of the reality; it must have in it something incommensurable, it must have a range of promise which outleaps immediate being, ceaselessly erecting for itself more opulent futures. Unless Nature be all awry such a personality cannot but be immortal.

The ideal nature

Evolution implies a foreseeing personality in Nature as a whole. Possession of knowledge, prevision, truth, reveals it in man. That so gifted, at once prophet and artist, man should condemn his present backward attainment, is

but the better surety for his future. For the correlative of his condemnation is his idealization, and idealization is the natural incentive to acquirement. Without the consciousness of present frailty and insufficiency there could be no meaning in human endeavor and no influx of that aspiration which is the psychical secret of evolution. It is not to be thought that Nature should have raised up a power so unique to no end nor fulfillment.

Tragic poetry

The truth that our adverse judgments of men are in fact but measures of the enlargement of man's nature is so evidenced in tragic poetry that I would revert once again to this most subtle and human of the forms of art.

The Aristotelian definition of tragedy is "imitation of life," but tragedy is much more than imitation: it is also an earnest and profound criticism, and along with imaginative exaltation it implies in the poet an attitude toward human affairs formed under the domination of his more ulterior faculties. It implies a largeness of view, partly philosophical perspective, partly the poise and dignity of the poet's judicial office. For the tragic poet is inevitably a judge, and that which he judges is the value of human nature as he finds it and its place in the economy of the world as the world is seen by him. It is the truth and convincingness of this world-view that gives majesty to his art; it is the economy and clarity with which is drawn the naked and essential man that gives it poignancy. The mere material catastrophe is of little moment compared with the fact that upon man in his most utterly seg-

Imitation of life

regate human character is passed a judgment partaking of the finality of the Last Judgment.

Æschylus

I suppose that the gift of cosmic vision has never been more conspicuous than with the first great tragic poet. Yet Æschylus read man's nature with a sympathy so broad that none of its traits could appear belittling: even its uglinesses assume heroic proportions. And however surely man may be shown in helpless bond to Fate, however certain the Nemesis, there is imported thereby no sense of human triviality: man may be weak and broken, a sorry pupil under the tutelage of stern masters, but he is never insignificant. In fact he is at the very center of the world riddle: it is for him that the decrees of Fate are drawn, for him that the gods execute their judgments.

Prometheus Bound

So intensely is the Æschylean cosmos anthropocentric that one might almost define it as 'Promethean' from that one of the poet's tragedies in which human fate looms most august as a *motif* of world evolution. Prometheus is the Titan martyr for man; he is a god ready to endure torment and indignity that he may aid humanity to a more godlike estate. So he brings to man the divine fire and the civilizing arts which fire enables. This he does in foreknowledge of the terrible vengeance of Zeus—a foreknowledge which is yet not sufficient to fortify his lips against the cry of woe when at last he is left by his tormentors chained on the bleak Caucasus:

> O holy Æther and swift-winging Winds,
> And tumbling Rivers, and unrest of Sea's

Illimitable laughter! All-mothering Earth,
And thou circling Sun all-viewing, ye I cry!
Behold me, god in god-inflicted woe:
Behold me, lacerate and worn
Mid stripes and shame and scorn
Doomed to withstand the years that come and go!
For oh, he did devise me cruel wrack—
New lord of high Immortals!
Oh, alack!
Today's woes wailing so I wail tomorrow's
And whence shall spring an ending of these sorrows?

Destiny

Yet he is not overborne; for his is the gift of prophetic insight into Nature and Destiny—ideal foresight, the supreme endowment of humanity. And so, even in the midst of affliction, his spirit —symbolizing the poet's perception of the divine in man—maintains its austere reverence of that Will of the World which has laid upon him at once his task and his pain.

Yet, what say I?
I have foreknown all things—the fated ways,—
And on me here falls naught unreckoned. 'Tis meet
With patience to bide out the destined course,
Saluting in inconquerable Necessity
The swerveless Will. . .
Still, on this theme of Fate
Nor silence nor its breaking is enjoined:
For boon to mortals have I got this pain;
Yea, I am he that searched the heavenly fire
Forth from its secret source, bore it, in the pith
Safe-prisoned, stealthily thence to be men's teacher
And the server of their arts. So I endure
His vengeance, swung fettered 'neath the barren sky!

Martyred divinity

This strange myth of the martyred divinity is but one expression of an ever-recurrent theme—the god sacrificed for man—seeming to dominate the shadowy background of the primitive human consciousness. At its basis is the human sense

of unworthiness, the conviction of sin; at its culmination is faith in redemption, the atonement. It is the naïve and perhaps fundamental expression of man's belief in the world's interest in him and his destiny.

Such faith is the essential background of noble tragedy. To the Greek view of the world it was unaffectedly natural: men were half divine, gods half human, and Nature but the outworking of the divine-in-human destinies of mankind. But modern thought has passed far from such easy anthropocentrism. Nowadays there remains nothing of that neighborliness of the Cosmos which could set its bounds just at the outskirts of the barbarians and establish its actuating powers upon the near Olympus. Earth's navel is no longer at Delphi,—nay, the earth itself, which then seemed the center of all, is but an incident of a solar system, in turn but an incident of the Universe. In a world of which the measures are light-years, what is a mere man? Human decrees and the ordinations of mythic gods, are they not pygmied beyond expression by that Natural Law which constitutes the formulary of a reality infinitely more stable and certain than any personality? Before the massiveness of such conception even the sense of physical abasement is outmatched by the shame of spiritual littleness and of the vanities of this contentious life.

Greek anthropocentrism

Modern cosmism

The degree and bearings of the transformation wrought is instructively brought out in the successes and failures of that recent work in which the modern cosmic view finds its most ambi-

tious exponent. Tragic poetry has received a distinctive addition to its genre in Mr. Hardy's *The Dynasts.* Challenging modernity appears already in its complex and novel structure, with its many acts and multitude of scenes, its shiftings from land to land, from earth to overworld and overworld to earth, even from sphere to sphere of the empyrean. And its men are handled in masses and nations rather than as individuals, while over and above them are the Phantom Intelligences, the Ancient Spirit and the Chorus of the Years, Spirits of Pities, Spirits of Rumours, Spirits Sinister and Sardonic, Earth's Shade,—in the background, dominating all, the Immanent Will.

Hardy's *Dynasts*

That the first impression produced should be of uncouthness, intemperance, chaos, is no matter of marvel, for it is not easy for the imagination to grasp the world *en bloc.* But a second impression gives the clue to the order in this chaos, and it is not a little significant that it should come from the sensuous altitudes which determine Mr. Hardy's perspectives. He shows us segments of earth's geography so broad that the busying human figures appear as "cheese-mites," and armies on the march as monochrome streams with a motion "peristaltic and vermicular like that of caterpillars"; the roofs and houses of cities suggest "the tesseræ of an irregular mosaic," while on the sea "far-separated groups of transports, convoyed by battleships, float on before the wind almost imperceptibly, like preened duck-feathers across a pond." Yet even this breadth of view is detail of the whole scope

The world *en bloc*

of the poet's intention. All Europe is the scene of his drama as in the Fore Scene from the Overworld he bounds it:

Europa

The nether sky opens, and Europe is disclosed as a prone and emaciated figure, the Alps shaping like a backbone, and the branching mountain-chains like ribs, the peninsula plateau of Spain forming a head. Broad and lengthy lowlands stretch from the north of France across Russia like a gray-green garment hemmed by the Ural mountains and the glistening Arctic Ocean.

The point of view then sinks downwards through space, and draws near to the surface of the perturbed countries, where the peoples, distressed by events which they did not cause, are seen writhing, crawling, heaving, and vibrating in their various cities and nationalities.

This altitudinous cosmical view is the very foundation of our modern way of thinking. It has a familiarity shared by no other *Weltansicht* —the degree of which we can only realize when we try to gain again the snug proportionateness of the Greek view or the fantastic and nebulous Mediæval conception of a treacherous earthly vale opening to magical caverns beneath and girt about with terrifying seas and monster-haunted marches. Mr. Hardy shows us our globe diminutive and mapped and we at once appreciate the display as familiar and normal.

But when we pass from this sensuous cosmism to the ideal, Mr. Hardy's drama is not so convincing. Not that it fails of either interest or thrill nor yet of that sincere response which is recognition of a true and moving portrayal of human nature. But the great tragic emotion, that hush and suspense which betokens revelation of man's inner character and destiny, this we do not meet. And the reason is that Mr.

Tragic emotion

Hardy's personifications of Nature (true to the Nineteenth Century) are insincere and half-hearted. From the Immanent Will to the Spirits of Rumours they represent rather a *tour de force* of the intellect than a confession of veritable faith. The reality of the poet's philosophy is materialistic determinism—the very feeblest and most tenuous shadow of that spiritual Will which we know in human character and are coming to read in Nature's evolutions.

Materialistic determinism

The hopeless incongruity of this materialist conviction with the instinct of true poetic animism is made apparent when, in the continuation of the Scene cited, the poet endeavors to visualize his philosophy:

> A new and penetrating light descends on the spectacle, enduing men and things with a seeming transparency, and exhibiting as one organism the anatomy of life and movement in all humanity and vitalized matter included in the display.

Its anatomy

This viewing, after a pause, the Spirit of Pities observes:

> Amid this scene of bodies substantive
> Strange waves I sight like winds grown visible,
> Which bear men's forms on their innumerous coils,
> Twining and serpentining round and through.
> Also retracting threads like gossamers—
> Except in being irresistible—
> Which complicate with some, and balance all.

And the Spirit of the Years interprets:

> These are the Prime volitions,—fibrils, veins,
> Will-tissues, nerves and pulses of the Cause,
> That heave throughout the Earth's compositure.
> Their sum is like the lobule of a Brain
> Evolving always that it wots not of;
> A Brain whose whole connotes the Everywhere,
> And whose procedure may but be discerned

> By phantom eyes like ours; the while unguessed
> Of those it stirs, who (even as ye do) dream
> Their motions free, their orderings supreme;
> Each life apart from each, with power to mete
> Its own day's measures; balanced, self-complete;
> Though they subsist but atoms of the One
> Labouring through all, divisible from none.

Horror of the Machine

Such effort to vivify dissections is merely grotesque and painful, and at the last the poem fails of convincing truth because it shares that monstrous deformity which is in the very essence of the Machine and gives a touch of the horrible even to the familiar tools of our material life. In each particular scene Mr. Hardy's men are human flesh and blood, but in the largeness of his view they become mere puppets dandled and jumped by a senseless world-mill.

Vanitas rerum

A chastened exaltation, sprung at once from humility in the won and faith in the unwon humanity, is the convincing token of great and fateful tragedy. In place of this *The Dynasts* leaves only a sense of *vanitas rerum*—as if the spectator were grown old in the seeing and had long ceased to be moved by events which he still must follow with perspicacious intelligence,—and we turn from the drama, world-weary and indifferent as Mr. Hardy's own gray Spirit of the Years.

It is little strange that an alteration of perspective so great as the modern view shows in comparison with the Greek should blur the anthropomorphic cast of thought and make less vivid the personifications of the imagination. But acknowledging the change, there is yet to say whether it indeed involves so much of a

dehumanizing of the world as may at first sight appear. The anthropomorphism which we reject is founded upon the merely terrene man, and the adequate ground for our rejection of it is the paltriness of the human body in the physical universe and the pettiness of current consciousness in comparison with the grandeur of Nature's evolutions. But there is a far more significant anthropomorphism—a psychomorphism—founded on that inner personality which we are coming to recognize as the essential part of man, and this, even in our most mechanical conceptions we do not wholly escape. The very gist of our recoil before Nature is poignant recognition of that secret and enduring self beside which the specious self is but froth and bubble of reality, and our abashment of Nature and Nature's law is in last analysis abashment before our own idealizing powers. Our measures of Nature's greatness are our own human conceptions, our human mind, and that of which we stand in awe in our contemplations of Nature can in fact be nought other than Nature's ideal image, of which, through her subtle and prophetic inspirations, ourselves are the creators.

Spiritual forms

There is a great passage in the *De Sublimitate* of Longinus—one of the greatest, I can but think, in literature—setting forth at once the duty and glory of human genius and the essence of its relation to the World:

Longinus

> Nature determined man to be no low or ignoble animal; but introducing us into life and this entire universe as into some vast assemblage, to be spectators, in a sort, of her contests, and most ardent competitors therein, did then implant in our souls an invincible and eternal love of that which is great and,

by our own standard, more divine. Therefore it is, that for the speculation and thought which are within the scope of human endeavour not all the universe together is sufficient, our conceptions often pass beyond the bounds which limit it; and if one were to look upon life all round, and see how in all things the extraordinary, the great, the beautiful stand supreme, he will at once know for what ends we have been born.[1]

"Invincible and eternal love"

It is this "invincible and eternal love" of the diviner part that justifies, and must ever justify, with the intuitive certainty which Longinus affirms, our faith in our own participation in its being. There is implied no denial of that baser part of reality which is indissolubly present in what we momentarily experience. But this baser part is the waste rather than the actuality of life,—the actuality, which is the Form and the Ideal, is in those supreme things which unerringly testify for what ends we have been born.

It is no little thing that a mind should have come to be which is capable of imagining a better than its native world, even a betterment of itself; and such imagination must be, in some sort, pledge of its own realization. What I may call the tragic sense—the sense of human unattainment—is our most precious attestation of the human value of this pledge. It proves us still incapable of living faith in other than a man-centered world—though the Man be divine and superhuman—and it bears witness to the enlargement of our natures beyond mortal bounds. In the order of Nature it is the psychical token of progress.

Sense of unattainment

Realization of present fragmentariness and inadequacy is thus a token of cosmic health. If

[1] Prickard's translation.

it be saddening for the sense of weakness that it brings and the pain which always attends a breaking away from the familiar and dear, it is yet salutary because it is a breaking away and represents promise of a finer reality to come.

Answer to pessimism

The power to idealize is Nature's *ad hominem* answer to pessimism; and Man's condemnation of man is his vindication of humanity.

VIII. THE SOCRATIC BERGSON

I

PERHAPS the greatness of a great character is best to be seen in the multitude of analogies which it evokes; at any rate, the quality of suggestiveness makes secure draft upon our garrulous human interest and certifies for its possessor some substantial credit. More than any other man Bergson is the butt of our contemporary curiosity; and since Bergson is by profession a thinker, and since a thinker, unlike your man of deeds, is by profession never obvious, it becomes a matter of moment to discover just why he so touches us to the quick. The answer is indicated, I think, by a countryman of Bergson's, Edouard Le Roy, who has put the names of Bergson and Socrates in suggestive collocation. Immediately we grasp the analogy and guess the source of Bergson's suggestive power; for we remember Socrates' own image of himself as a gadfly rousing the noble but somnolent steed to action. We have been long lost in admiration of the mighty thews, the glossy flanks, the high carriage of our intellectual Pegasus; it has remained for Bergson to show him lumbering and scant of breath.

Bergson and Socrates

"'Know thyself': the ancient maxim has remained the device of philosophy since Socrates, the device which marks at least that initial moment where, bending toward the depths of the subject, it undertakes its proper work of penetration, whereas

Know thyself

science continues a surface expansion. To this venerable motto each philosophy, turn by turn, has given a commentary and an application. But M. Bergson, more than any other, has profoundly renewed the sense of this, as of all that he touches." These are words with which M. Le Roy introduces his analogy, and assuredly they are words that merit some pondering by those who are in quest of the well-spring of that humanism which we carry back to the Greeks—too often, I suspect, with the lugubrious conviction that it was dried at the source.

Seekers of inward truth

Socrates, Augustine, Descartes, Kant,—yes, and Bergson: each of these men is great because he has sought to know first of all his own soul. And all, save as yet the last, have inspired great edifices of philosophy, which we count as the treasure-houses of human thinking. They are men of a type: pertinacious questors in their central realm, indifferent to the learning which makes our average pride, eager for some internal truth where others rest content with outward show. The knowledge which they seek bears the better name of wisdom; for it is never that illusion of intellect which dissipates itself in chimerical consumption of second intentions, but always an intimate intuition so bound to conduct that it can point the effective way to men's salvation. It is knowledge that joins to action; it is humanistic knowledge in the only true sense of humanism.

Socrates, so Xenophon says, would not dispute of that which the Sophists call "the world" nor yet of the laws which govern the movements of the stars; his interest was in human affairs, above all in justice and courage and temperance and wisdom. He

"brought philosophy down from heaven," diverting men's attention from τὸ ὄν to τὸ ἀγαθόν, from ontology to morality. The world "below the Moon" was the world of his concern; and we must remember the sharp division which the ancients made of this sub-lunary realm; above the Moon is the region of motions eternal and incorruptible, below it is the domain not only of spatial change, of physical motion, but also of that change in time, generation and decay, of which the Moon's own crescence and senescence is, so to speak, an image. Θνατὰ θνατοῖσι πρέπει: surely mortal things befit mortality! and what is more truly ours than this precious transiency of love and birth and death? and what more alien to us than a Being transcendently aloof, whether in space or in thought, from all the change and season of our days? All the ontological scheming and proclaiming of the pre-Socratics—what trivial matter it seems when the "midwife of souls" begins asking after the Good!

The World below the Moon

In a recent number of the *Revue Néo-Scolastique,* an entirely devout Thomist assails the Bergsonian notion of time. "In reading the long and subtle developments given by the author to this thesis" (the intuition of time), says M. Farges, "it is impossible for a philosopher even a little familiar with the conceptions of general metaphysics and of ontology not to be struck by the number and gravity of the confusions of ideas there encountered. The most fundamental of our classic conceptions have been more or less emptied of their natural meaning, mutilated, topsy-turvied at pleasure, to such point of distraction as to seize with vertigo an inexperienced reader. If we may be permitted the expres-

A Thomist critic

sion, we would say—without wishing to impugn in the least the intentions of the author—that it is a veritable 'sabotage' of ontology." *Un vrai "sabotage" d'Ontologie!* And our Thomist goes on to show—with what pious horror best leave to surmise—that Bergson has violated all the categorical conventions which make the philosophy of Aquinas the most categorical and conventional of all philosophies. Bergson will not play the dialectic game—the essence of which is to concede the dialectic ontology. Was it not just so that Socrates shocked the "physicians of ignorance"—Hippias answering questions of astronomy *ex cathedra* and Protagoras sulking because Socrates would not "sail on his sea of words, beyond sight of land?"

Sabotage of ontology

Astronomy and dialectic are no doubt noble exercises, befitting the high court of philosophy; but it is God alone who can always geometrize. For mere mortals the urgency of conduct is fundamental in life; leisure for thought follows after; ethics is the essential science; ontology and logic are luxuries of the fortunate. And if at times we lose ourselves in the fatuous game of abstraction, forgetting the human scale of values and sacrificing our energies in arrogant attempts upon the empyrean, then surely the best gift of philosophy is a recall to the senses. "Socrates autem primus"—these are the famous words of Cicero—"philosophiam devocavit e cælo et in urbibus conlocavit et in domus etiam introduxit et coegit de vita et moribus rebusque bonis et malis quærere."

God the geometrist

II

The mind in search of analogies must surely be

Greeks and Moderns

struck by the many analogies between pre-Socratic Greek philosophy and the philosophy called modern. Not a school of the one but finds its analogue in the other. The Milesian evolutionists could not have missed their kinship with Herbert Spencer and τὸ ἄπειρον is clearly cousin german to the "Unknowable." Heraclitean flux and Sophistic scepticism find their parallels in modern sensationalism and the scepticism of Hume. The relationship of the Pythagoreans to our mathematical physicists is as obvious as that of the Democritean atomism to our own prevailing materialism. The Eleatics are the veritable archetype of German Absolute Idealism; and if Hegel is the modern Parmenides, we no less securely identify a modern Zeno in Mr. Bradley, who with triumphant dialectic reduces his master's teachings to absurdity. I need not speak of the new school of Protagoras; they are everywhere self-proclaiming.

The stage cleared

Plainly, the stage is superbly cleared for a modern Socrates—provided, of course, that we still have something to hope from philosophy; for to a certain type of mind the Greeks have long since pronounced the final philosophic dicta; henceforth human experience can but exemplify what they, in their primal wisdom, once for all enunciated. As Santayana expresses it—with an apodictic austerity which brooks no question—"the age of controversy is past; that of interpretation has succeeded." It seems to me that this is a familiar note; the gaunt and corded physiognomy of Mediæval thinking rises before me, ascetically humble before the oracular Authority of the Past, but savagely intolerant of the plastic and vital flesh which alone can give the

impress of character to what else must be but caricature of our essential humanity. The main difference is that where your Mediævalist lays his stress upon the omniscience of Providence, our classicists extol the omniscience of the Greeks—and as the Greeks were undeniably human, *ipso facto* their disciples are humanists (indeed, I should add *the* humanists).

Utopia

And human it is—to sigh for Saturn's golden reign, to remember Paradise with tears,—for dreams such as these mark the unconquerable idealism of a race which, mired in the black and stinking present, must yet project its vision of perfection into some roseate dawn of life. But is it less human to look forward? Canaan, Utopia, the Celestial City, which we can strive for as well as innerly see,—are not these, too, humane? and because they are inspirations to effort as well as patterns of delight, should we therefore cast them forth? If contemplation is the only virtue, if action is necessarily base, I am one who is not ashamed to be reckoned in with the anthropologists—horrific folk who, remembering that the Greeks anointed their bodies with ointment from flasks of gracious form and delicate design, with the same thought recall the strong butter which enriches the shining beauty of the black African, and thank their benignant stars that creams and pomades are more reticent than of yore.

Laputa

Unquestionably Socrates would have enjoyed a voyage to Laputa. What a fine ironic speech he would have made about it! But would he have discovered wisdom amid the star-gazers? "One man makes a vortex all round, and steadies the earth by the heaven; another gives the air as a support to the

earth, which is a sort of broad trough. Any power which in arranging them as they are arranges them for the best never enters into their minds; and instead of finding any superior strength in it, they rather expect to discover another Atlas of the world who is stronger and more everlasting and more containing than the good;—of the obligatory and containing power of the good they think nothing, and yet this is the principle which I would fain learn if any one would teach me."

William James

I am not affirming that Bergson is in every respect the Socrates of today. In many respects William James seems more nearly to hold the character —with his eager and many-sided inquisitiveness, his wilful insistence upon the concrete, his inability to see ideas other than as principles of action, his power to seize and inspire his fellow men. James is like Socrates in all this; but the Socrates of today is a temper rather than an individual, it is actuating the thought of many men, demanding of them that their philosophic search be a search after the good, and a good that shall be not an object of contemplation but a pattern of conduct. In France—a nation whose social genius makes it a natural field for the Socratic spirit—this temper is most marked; and it is in France that Bergson has performed the needful and characteristically Socratic office of confuting the Laputans. The modern mind has been afflicted with a kind of spiritual astigmatism, impelling it to bifocalize the world from every angle of observation—"physical and psychical," "mechanical and teleological," "appearance and reality," all the nonsensical compartmentalising which we have been accustomed to call philosophy,—and invariably, as

Spiritual astigmatism

it would seem, to make the worse choice of some cosmic *Ansicht* the measure of our wisdom. Bergson protests against this. He reminds us that discursive reason is at best but a preparation for more thorough understanding, for completer *sense,* and that man's part is to know first of all his proper self. His "anti-intellectualism" gives much pious offense, but he seems to me only to be saying that genuine knowledge is humanly assimilable knowledge, νόησις rather than διάνοια. "By intuition," he says, "is meant the kind of *intellectual sympathy* by which one places oneself within an object in order to coincide with what is unique in it and consequently inexpressible. Analysis, on the contrary, is the operation which reduces the object to elements already known, that is, to objects common both to it and other objects. To analyze, therefore, is to express a thing as a function of something other than itself." Is not this plain statement of plain fact? If it be not so, the fault lies not in the fact stated, but in our own grotesque prepossession with that cellularization of the mind which we call psychology, wherein we seek to reduplicate by art the artificial cellulæ into which we would compress the world. Plato's was a better inspiration; from the world of Ideas we can come with illuminated eyes to the spectacle of materiality, but never from the material world can we surmise the nature of that being whose definition is power. As Bergson puts it, from intuition to analysis we readily pass, but from analysis to intuition never.

Analysis and intuition

III

From a different approach to the problem of knowledge Henri Poincaré made quite as sharp a

Poincaré

distinction of intuition from analysis as does Bergson; and for the same fundamental reason. "In mathematics," he says, "logic is called *Analysis* and to say analysis is to say *division, dissection.* It can have no other instrument save the scalpel or the microscope. Logic and intuition have each its necessary rôle. Both are indispensable. Logic, which alone can give certitude, is the instrument of demonstration; intuition is the instrument of invention." This is the distinction. The reason why it is radical Poincaré states clearly in another connection, where he is contrasting the analytic with the intuitive elements in our conceptions of spatial continua. After resuming the analytical definition of a continuum of *n* dimensions (namely, "an ensemble of *n* co-ordinates"), he proceeds:

Mathematical logic

"This definition makes a ready disposal of the intuitive origin of the notion of continuity, and of all the riches which this notion conceals. It returns to the type of those definitions which have become so frequent in mathematics since the tendency to 'arithmetize' this science,—definitions mathematically irreproachable but philosophically unsatisfying. They replace the object to be defined and the intuitive notion of this object by a construction made of simpler materials; one sees indeed that one can effectively make this construction with these materials, but one sees also that one can make many others. *What is not to be seen is the deeper reason why one assembles these materials in just this, and not in another fashion.* The 'arithmetization' of mathematics is not a bad thing, but it is not all."

Continuity

Just this World

Poincaré diagnoses precisely the weakness that besets all abstractive thinking. In mathematics it is

Arithmetized philosophy

"arithmetization"; in philosophy—and, I suspect, at times in criticism—it is the scholastic passion for dichotomizing. Over-conceptualization, the word for the reality, the letter for the spirit—fascinated by the ease with which we can palm and shuffle the airy mintages of our intellect, we yield to the gaming instinct and stake our all . . . . only to lose, say Poincaré and Bergson, for truth is cast in the firmer mould of active experience. If philosophy stood for no more than mental dexterity, it would have been long perished. But a living philosophy means life, as Plato knew,—and in the *Parmenides* what lordly sport he made of your unredeemed dialectic!

The "arithmetization" of mathematics, which Poincaré contrasts with "intuition," represents, I believe, the last stand in a process of regressive abstraction which has been going on since the Hellenes first formulated the idea of physical science. It is a process so apt of application that I would briefly resume it.

Greek physics

The starting-point is figured by Archimedes' demand for a ποῦ στῶ from which to move the world. Such a ποῦ στῶ, such an immovable core of physical reality, seemed to the Greek physicists an essential of science. It is axiomatic, says Dercyllides, a truth "accordant with reason," that in the Universe some bodies are mobile and some immobile; that all are either mobile or immobile is beyond reason. Greek physics was reared upon this assumption. The unmoving Earth was placed at the center and about it the revolving panorama of the Heavens. The Pythagorean suggestion of an Earth and a Counter-Earth revolving in unison about a central

fire is only a variation of this, for Hestia, the Hearth of the Cosmos, but takes the place of the unmoving Earth. Even the atomism of Democritus and Lucretius accepts the same principle; for while the Cosmos takes its form from the swirl of sweeping atoms, this is entirely because their motion is a gravitational, a *downward* flow: the universe possesses an "up" and a "down," a fixed spatial frame within which all motions can be measured and computed.

Cosmic space

The Greeks never passed beyond this conception; and indeed, it is only today that we moderns—mainly under the guidance of Poincaré—have come to realize the fictive and conventional character of our formulation of the Cosmos as a function of absolute time and space. We have long been taught that Copernicus accomplished the great translation from the Old to the New; and in the field of morals (little as that was in his intention) this is near the truth, but I greatly doubt if the real life of his influence is not to be found in the stimulated interest in mechanical motions, which resulted in Newtonian physics. Newton made definite once for all the conception of a frame of absolute time and absolute space within which all change could be reckoned. He carried to its consequence Greek astronomy. The material πού στῶ, in its gross planetary form, disappears, but its place is taken by the hardly less material shape, spatial and temporal, by which all possible events are measured and circumscribed. The cosmic stage is cleared for the action, and it remains only for Laplace, with his nebular gyres, to complete the *mise en scène*.

Copernicus

Newton

Laplace

More effectually than any other, Poincaré has pricked this bubble. The axiom of Dercyllides,

which in Newton's thought is denied for everything excepting the empty frame of Creation, he has negated *in toto*. Time and space, he has shown, are as relative and fluxional as atoms and ions; they expand with our grandeurs and contract with our modesties—or at least, we cannot know if they do not. To put it in other terms, there is a limit to our outer and physical knowledge, and that limit is set, not by the stations of the stars, but by our frail and changing human needs.

Physis

And the "arithmeticians"? Blind to the fact that the central meaning of life must be the concrete experience of living, and step by step driven from the vivid φύσις of the Greek naturalists, on through the welter of atomism, and thence out into the chill vacancy of absolute time and space—from this last resort banished, they still pursue their restless process of standardization in a chaos of abstraction so transcendental that there is nothing left to standardize. They seek a Station and a Frame, altogether oblivious of the fact that their sole content is a chimæra *in vacuo bombinans*.

Mathematical continuity

In a characteristic and eloquent passage Poincaré says: "Le continu physique est pour ainsi dire une nébuleuse non résolue, les instruments les plus perfectionnés ne pourraient parvenir à la résoudre; . . . . c'est l'esprit seule qui peut la résoudre et c'est le continu mathématique qui est la nébuleuse résolue en étoiles." The stars themselves are apparitions, singled by our limitations out of a Nature whose essence is fathomless to our gaze.

IV

From the ancient axiom of the mobile and the

immobile, Aristotle derives a corollary of the utmost moment. "Evidently," he says, "those who say all things are at rest are not right, nor are those who say that all things are in movement. For if all things are at rest, the same statements will always be true and the same always false. . . . . And if all are in motion, nothing will be true, nothing false." In other words, the frame of the physical world is also the frame of the logical; truth and error lock step with time and space. *Metaphysics* 1012b

The Greeks invented and Aristotle formulated logic. Like their mathematics it has proved a potent sharpener of the world's thought—but, as in the case of mathematical thinking, the blade is in some danger of being whetted to a nub. The "arithmetizing" of mathematics finds its parallel in the scholasticizing of the intellect. In each case the error is that of identifying reason with the form rather than with the matter of intelligence, forgetting that what makes our thought living thought is not its power of abstract construction, but its intuitive ability to perceive why experience assembles its materials "in just this, and not in another fashion." Form and matter of intelligence

The Greeks were many things, but no one will deny that they were not philologists. For them speech was barbarous or Hellenic; and as speech, so experience. This has been the misfortune of logic, which in a large sense has been merely a refinement from Hellenic discourse. That it has adapted itself to the like-tempered tongues of western Europe is perhaps as much due to the autocracy of Hellenic thought as to their own native genius. In any case, the analytic tendency, fostered in Low Latin, and carried to its extreme in tongues developed under Aristotelian logic

Latin patronage is little more than the bitter exemplification of category and syllogism in their unredeemed application to human discourse. A highly inflected language like the Greek could sustain the syllogistic analysis without utter loss of life; but the lapidary zeal of the Scholastics, cutting, sawing, polishing their concepts to nicest exclusion and closest interlocking, has tended to convert our instrument of speech into a cunning mosaic rather than the fluid reflection of thought; it is, as Plato might say, "thrice removed from the king and from the truth."

Language an *index rerum*

The consequence to modern speech has been to make it hard and mechanical; language has become an *index rerum,* a kind of notation of experience, whose curious affinity to mathematical notations is hourly bringing mathematics and logic into more indiscriminate communion. Undoubtedly for practical affairs, for business, analytic speech is the most efficient human instrument ever created,—but the walls of the counting-house are not yet the pillars of the firmament; to the business of living there is to be added the art of living well. Our danger is a mere external fascination in the click and glitter of our highly polished verbal machine; so that our thinking resolves into a drone of Aves and Paters, each told by an undeniably solid bead and each devoid of all spiritual significance. The most

Mormon architecture

horrible monument I have ever beheld is the Mormon temple in Salt Lake City; it is built with deadly symmetry of line and angle, every joint conspicuous and every unit in relief,—exactly as a child might build with blocks; and what makes it so horrible is just that it is infantile in conception and monstrous

in size, the work of beings in stature men, who had yet never been able to put away childish things; we get from it the very shiver which the deeds of the Cyclopes gave the Greeks. Under the stringency of a logic which was no doubt a valuable criticism of a more plastic speech, our modern discourse, and the thought of which it is the image, tends constantly to sink into a like monstrous infantilism.

Linguistic analysis

Aristotelian logic in its iron demand that words shall have that constancy of meaning—conceived by Aristotle as a sort of conceptual essence—which they never have in living speech, has constructed for the intellectual world a kind of frame, analogous to that established by Greek mathematics in the physical realm, with the principle of identity for its πού στῶ. It has enabled rigid thinking, but in substituting concepts for intuitions it has too often purchased elegance at a cost of sincerity and power. There is another form of expression, belonging to barbarous tongues, disdained of the Greeks, which it is worth while to hold in mind if only that we may gauge the distance we have travelled.

Polysynthesis

Polysynthesis or holophrasis, it is called, and a pertinent example (which I borrow from Jane Harrison), is the Fuegian *mamihlapinatapai* "looking-at-each-other, -hoping-that-either-will-offer-to-do-something-which -both-parties-desire-but-are-unwilling-to-do." The vital situation is the thing designated (if "thing" it may be called), the expression being moulded to suit just this, and not any possible, mutuality. If speech can hit off intuition, we can hardly imagine an apter conformity.

The so-called "anti-intellectualism" of Bergson is no more than a fundamental insistence that experi-

Bergson's anti-intellectualism

ence is primarily holophrastic. His criticism of the logomachies of the conceptmongers, his asseveration that the test of reason is intuition, above all his contention that *la durée réelle,* gathering in itself before and after, is the focus of reality, all this is but his studied protest against the artifice and inconsequence of our mental legerdemain. He is telling us—what we have often suspected—that the human spirit is never garrulous nor elegant in its tense moments of growth, but is rather awkward and stammering, frail of speech but gifted with a power more than of tongues to stir in men's hearts a responsive understanding. What, I wonder, would become of our tragedies, and the living strength of them, save for that energy of situation and action which always at the last outpasses the eloquence of words?

Fallacy of the dividing intellect

The lifelessness, the dramatic sterility, with which the mathematical method has invested the physical universe is the butt of Poincaré's criticism. The similar lifelessness and dramatic sterility with which our philosophy has been infected is the object of Bergson's attack. In each case the disease—which might well be called the fallacy of the "dividing intellect"—is of Greek origin, though arithmetization and concept-polishing have alike gone far beyond the surmise of any Greek;—and that the disease is one and the same is well enough evidenced by our contemporary blurring of the boundary between logic and mathematics,—an identical bent is leading to identical conclusions.[1] Bergson and Poincaré have each ministered to our ailment, starting respectively

[1] "Mathematics as a science commenced when first some one, probably a Greek, proved propositions about *any* things or about *some* things, without specification of definite particular things." A. N. Whitehead, *Introduction to Mathematics. Fons et origo* of logic and mathematics are thus explicitly identified.

from its inner and its outer symptoms, but finding an identical cure in their critiques of our apprehensions of time and space, with the single implication of the primacy of intuition. Thus at last the *πού στῶ* —whether of Archimedes or Aristotle—is rightfully banished to the realm of illusion.

La durée réelle

As for the reputed "mysticism" of Bergson's notion of time, of *la durée réelle,* I may best reply by citing the naïve antagonism of my excellent Thomist. "At first glance," he says, "it would seem subtle and indeed paradoxical to wish to found a whole philosophy upon the notion of Time. But upon reflection, and especially remembering the marvelous Peripatetic synthesis entirely erected upon the notion of Movement—a concept so neighboring that of Time, one is tempted rather to give credit to the author,—not to be sure, without some misgiving, for if Movement is a phenomenon patent to the senses, this is not true of Time, the most obscure and mysterious perhaps of all natural phenomena. This contrast was indeed already remarked by the ancients when they said, 'Motus sensibus ipsis patet, non autem tempus.' Hence we may very reasonably fear that sophism could find naught more easy than to conceal itself amid these profound shades, and that in place of building upon a rock, as Aristotle, M. Bergson erects his house upon the shifting sands of conjecture." Proceeding, he quotes Aristotle's definition of time as the number of motion in relation to before and after, *ἀριθμὸς κινήσεως κατὰ τὸ πρότερον καὶ ὕστερον,* adding in comment: "This definition has regard for the time *which measures.* As to the time *which is measured,* it is no other than movement, in that it falls under the measure of the before and

Time measuring and measured

after. It is the same distinction as that of the *numbering* number and the *numbered* number, *τὸ ἠριθμήμενον, τὸ ἀριθμητόν.*"

Truly, a completer justification of Bergson's intention could not be required. Bergson had diverted attention from the numbering to the numbered; he has recalled us from the formal measure to the reality which is measured; and he has given us to see that that reality is itself a movement which outruns all our measures in its creative evolution of a world. Ontology destroyed is cosmology redivivus.

Cosmology redivivus

IX. THE DEFINITION OF NUMBER

I

"SCIENCE," writes Gaston Milhaud,[1] "in enouncing its ever-increasing series of truths, obviously supplies—whether one reflect upon it or not—the most powerful argument against scepticism. And in this respect mathematics plays a special rôle by reason of the evidence which clothes all its propositions and by reason of the complete satisfaction which its demonstrations give to our thirst for comprehension. There, at least, is a domain where thought in search of clarity, of evidence, and of light, exercises itself in an ideal fashion. Everywhere else, discussion is founded on the right to proclaim as certain an enounced truth, and accord upon the value and legitimacy of each insight comes but slowly: in mathematics this is not so. If, for the choice of axioms, we give ourselves voluntarily to philosophical investigations whose conclusions vary, at bottom there is no one ready to abandon the postulates of ancient geometry, and the question was not even proposed by the Greeks. As to demonstrations, it seems impossible that two minds, however different they may be—granting their disposal, at need, of obvous misunderstandings—will not speedily agree upon the rigor of the reasoning, and consequently upon the rigor of the conclusions. And whether one is aware of it or not, the habit of such a movement of thought creates in us a naïve confi-

Science and mathematics

[1] *Les Philosophes-géomètres de la Grèce*, 1900; pp. 2-3.

dence in the puissance of our understanding,—so that it would be a miracle if the philosophical geometer did not somewhere testify to it, did not sometimes under the most penetrating conceptions bear along a disconcerting dogmatism."

Freedom and restraint in mathematics

We may take this statement, I think, as a fair representation at once of the fascination and the dangers which beset mathematical reasonings. There is no field of human thought, I imagine, which yields so paradoxical a feeling of freedom and of constraint as does mathematics: the freedom springing from the twofold consciousness, first, of our having chosen the postulates from which we proceed, and second, of the endlessness of the possible elaborations of our reasonings; the constraint arising from our sense of the undeniableness, and therefore the necessity, of mathematical demonstrations,—i. e., from their freedom from contradiction. Thus from mathematics we derive the satisfaction which our instinct for law and order always yields in finding itself fulfilled, without at the same time sacrificing our self-gratifying conviction of the importance of the human factor in the operations performed. In the study of physical nature there is always a certain abasement of humanity, due to the passive attitude of scientific observation, accompanied by a feeling of outer and brute constraint; but the mathematician, with an even greater assurance of the necessity of his results, bears with him also a lively consciousness of the significance of his own activity in bringing about these results, and so attains, as it were, a kind of Zeus-like supremacy to the fated ends which, while they bind him, are yet his own enactment.

Mathematical dogmatism

But is not this doubly reason for caution against mathematical dogmatism? and especially that form of it which rests its denial of our more ordinary intuitions, not upon its eventual translatability, but upon its untranslatability into the forms of our common human experience? Doubtless truth is difficult and obscure; but dare we concede that it is so ineffably obscure as to transcend the discourse of life? Of course I am speaking of the modern science of logistic.[2]

II

Number

What is the meaning of number? and in what sense are the hairs of our heads and the other phenomena of nature numbered? This is the question.

The old-fashioned view of number found its essence to lie in *discontinuity* coupled with a notion of *series*. "Number is discontinuous," says Clerk-Maxwell;[3] "we pass from one number to the next *per saltum*." The perception of the discontinuity was regarded as empirical and intuitive. In the language of Aristotle, "We perceive number by the negation of continuity, and also by the special senses, for each sensation is a unity."[4] The perception of the series was usually accredited to the act of counting, though this was often also somewhat confusedly regarded as an act of adding. If I speak of this view in a past tense, it is only because of its long history; not that it is dead.

Aristotle

In the thinking of such men as Hobbes and Locke this conception eventuates in an out-and-out

[2] Which is a not altogether happy name; for with the Greeks "arithmetic" was the more, "logistic" the less theoretic science. However, it is convenient, and I follow its use by Couturat (*Encyclopædia of the Philosophical Sciences*, Vol. I, *Logic*, p. 137).

[3] *Encyclopædia Britannica*, 9th ed., III, 37.

[4] *De Anima*, 425*a*, 5.

nominalism. "Number," quoth Hobbes,[5] "is ex-

Hobbes

posed either by the exposition of points or of the names of number, *one, two, three, etc.;* and those points must not be contiguous, so as that they cannot be distinguished by notes, but they must be so placed that they may be *discerned* one from another; for from this it is that number is called *discrete quantity,* whereas all quantity which is designed by motion is called *continual quantity.* But that number may be exposed by the names of number it is necessary that they be recited by heart and in order, as one, two, three, etc.; for by saying one, one, one, and so forward we know not what number we are at beyond two or three; which also appear to us in this manner not as number, but as figure."

It is always worth while citing Locke in connections of this kind, not because of the analytical value of his expositions, which is usually slight, but because he gives, with a dogmatic perspicuousness that leaves nothing to be desired, the first reflections of ordinary common sense. He says:[6] "By the re-

Locke

peating the idea of an unit and joining it to another unit, we make thereof one collective idea marked by the name two: and whosoever can do this, and proceed on, still adding one more to the last collective idea which he had of any number and gave a name to it, may count, or have ideas for several collections of units distinguished from one another, as far as he hath a series of names for following numbers, and a memory to retain that series with their several names; all numeration being but still the adding of one unit more, and giving to the whole

[5] *Concerning Body,* XII, 5.

[6] *Essay,* II, xvi, 5.

together, as comprehended in one idea, a new or distinct name or sign, whereby to know it from those before and after, and distinguish it from every smaller or greater multitude of units. So that he that can add one to one, and so to two, and so go on with his tale, taking still with him the distinct names belonging to every progression; and so again, by subtracting an unit from each collection, retreat and lessen them; is capable of all the ideas of number within the compass of his language, or for which he hath names, though perhaps not of more."

Locke's presuppositions

In this account it is obvious that Locke presupposes: (*a*) the notion of *unity,* which, indeed, he has just previously stated to have "no shadow of variety or composition in it"; (*b*) the notion of a *collection*—his "collective idea"; (*c*)the notion of *serial order;* (*d*) the notion of *quantity*—greater and less; (*e*) the notion of a mathematical *operation* —addition, subtraction. Thus the main elements in the concept he is describing are assumed; at the same time there may be a seasoning of hard-headedness in his stout nominalism. For his numbers are names: "Without names or marks we can hardly make use of numbers in reckoning, especially where the combination is made up of any great multitude of units, which, put together without a name or mark to distinguish that precise collection, will hardly be kept from being a heap in confusion." One of the primary issues in the modern discussion of the nature of number is just whether supersensible (or superintuitible) mathematical ideas do not resolve into mere nomenclature and the science itself into a kind of transcendental logomachy.

His nominalism

That the Lockean type of nominalism is by no

means extinct is evidenced by the definition of number offered in the *Encyclopædia Britannica*:[7] "Suppose we fix on a certain sequence of names 'one,' 'two,' 'three,' . . ., or symbols such as 1, 2, 3, . .; this sequence being always the same. If we take a set of concrete objects and name them in succession 'one,' 'two,' 'three,' . . . . naming each once and once only, we shall not get beyond a certain name, e. g., 'six.' Then, in saying that the number of objects is six, what we mean is that the name of the last object named is six. We therefore only require a definite law for the formation of the successive names or symbols. The symbols 1, 2, . . 9, 10 . ., for instance, are formed according to a definite law; and in giving 253 as the *number* of a set of objects we mean that if we attach to them the symbols 1, 2, 3, ... in succession, according to this law, the symbol attached to the last object will be 253. If we say that this act of attaching a symbol has been performed 253 times, then 253 is an *abstract* (or *pure*) *number*. Underlying this definition," continues the writer, "is a certain assumption, viz., that if we take the objects in a different order, the last symbol attached will still be 253. This, in an elementary treatment of the subject, must be regarded as axiomatic; but it is really a simple case of mathematical induction."

Wm. F. Sheppard

Discontinuity and serial order

The presupposition of discontinuity and of serial order is as obvious in this last as in the two previously given accounts of the number concept. We set out with our known power of observing differences and naming things—perceptual discrimination and apperceptional unification; but by the time we

[7] 11th ed., article "Arithmetic."

have accomplished the office of Adam and are taking our earned rest, we discover that the names we have given are vicariously indifferent to the things of "first intention," and in addition that they have won for themselves a wholly novel and stringent interdependence,—the smoke of our experience has transformed itself into a hugely articulate Jinni, and, as by a miracle, number is manifest! Aristotle says,[8] "In general what exists in the essence of number, besides quantity, is quality; for the essence of each number is what it is when taken once, 6 being not what it is when taken twice or thrice, but what it is once, that is, 6." It is very apparent that a succession of qualitative discriminations will not in itself yield quantity; and without an understanding of quantity how can number be defined?

Aristotle

III

The ideal of the logisticians (though I speak with misgivings) is at once the infallibility and the universal applicability of their reasonings. They would create for us a rational universe entirely freed from the taint of empiricism, mathematical in its certainties, but hypermathematical in its significance,—in short, they would achieve what Spinoza so greatly attempted. Because of the annoying miasmas which beset the earth-born speech of men, they would substitute therefor a kind of Esperanto of the soul (*anima intellectiva*) modeled after the discarnate and purified symbolism of mathematics. Clearly the approach to this consummacy of the intellect should be through the concept of number.

Mathematical logic

First of all, this concept must be relieved of all

[8] *Metaph.*, 1020*b*.

Counting

traces of Lockean empiricism. The simple notion, prevalent among the ordinary, that the idea of number is in some fashion derived from the act of counting is one of which we must be eased. For what is

Russell

meant by counting? "To this question we usually get only some irrelevant psychological answer, as, that counting consists in successive acts of attention. In order to count 10, I suppose that ten acts of attention are required: certainly a most useful definition of the number 10!"[9] The point is well taken, and we can see that it applies conclusively to the whole British tradition, from Hobbes onward. "We must not, therefore, bring in counting where the definition of numbers is in question."

Dedekind

To be sure, this judgment has not prevailed in the new school *ab initio*. Dedekind states that from examination of what takes place in counting an aggregate of things, we are brought to consider the mind's powers (*a*) of relating things to things, and (*b*) of letting a thing correspond with, or represent, a thing; and that upon these powers as a foundation the whole science of number must be based.[10] *Relation* and *equivalence* are thus fundamental ideas—or, perhaps, operations—which get their meaning from counting, and give its meaning to number; but it may be that the counting here meant is of that purely noetic variety which includes "denumeration" of the infinite along with "enumeration" of the finite, and which, putatively, owes no dependence to our commoner experience.

But if not counting, then neither is mathematical induction the key to the meaning of number; for

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[9] Russell, *Principles of Mathematics*, p. 114.

[10] *Was sind und was sollen die Zahlen?*

mathematical induction, with its dual stress upon *next-to-next* and *recurrence,* is no more than the act of counting transubstantiated by that unity-in-variety which is the root of all perception. "We may define finite numbers as those that can be reached by mathematical induction, starting from 0 and increasing by 1 at each step,"[11] but such a definition does not apply to the vastly greater realm of transfinite numbers,—and it would be obvious waste to devote thought to a definition applicable only to the "little corner," as Poincaré calls it, "where the finite numbers hide themselves."

Mathematical inductior

By what device, then, are we to pry into the mystery of number? What idea—which the mutations of the Wheel of Time have brought back to us freed from the contaminations of a too mortal birth—will give us its eluctant essence? The answer is familiar: A finite cardinal number is a class of equivalent classes; an infinite cardinal number is a class of classes a part of which is equivalent to the whole. It is the idea of *class* which is to resolve for us the riddle of reasoning.

Numbers are "classes"

Readily enough our imaginations seize the suggestion. The older, empirical conception of number as somehow directly derived from the act of counting, in reason as in history, is replaced by one in which counting and all other operations flow from an initial insight into a group situation. The point of regard has been reversed, and in place of seeing a perceptual situation built up out of moments, we see the moments emerge from the situation; logical priorism disenthrones empiricism, deduction precedes induction—and, indeed, not unnaturally ab-

[11] Russell, *op. cit.,* p. 123.

sorbs the latter, for any induction which may lay a claim to reason is but deduction disguised.[12]

Influence of temperament

But this might flow from a mere distinction of temperament;[13] for we have long been accustomed to Urania and Pandemos in reason as in love. The matter which calls for a nicer determination is the relation of this term *class* to its content. What does it mean?

It is difficult to be precise in the analysis of terms which are customarily defined only by a set of properties couched in the form of postulates. What one arrives at is a word *(flatus vocis)* with a variety of meanings, but meanings eviscerated of that heart of reality which we feel to be present in our more current, if less critical, living speech. Indeed, all that saves this rarified discourse from the emptiness of nominalism is the requirement of consistency as between the postulates; their freedom from mutual contradiction is their sole claim to a single and central meaning. This (if I understand it) is the only principle of definition recognized in logistic.

Limit

What, then, are the properties of a "class"? Clearly, I think, the prime requisite is that it shall constitute a *limit.* I do not mean a limit which conveys a sense of a beyond (if that can be avoided), but a limit which clarifies our sense of the within,—such a limit as, for example, is represented by the cardinal number of the class of finite numbers, or again, such a limit as we ordinarily intend by the

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12 *Ibid.*, pp. 11*n.*, 441.

13 This, apparently, is Poincaré's notion of his own divergence from Russell. "M. Russell me dira," he says, "qu'il ne s'agit pas de psychologie, mais de logique et d'épistémologie; et moi, je serai conduit à répondre qu'il n'y a pas de logique et d'épistémologie indépendantes de la psychologie; et cette profession de foi clora probablement la discussion parce qu'elle mettra en évidence une irrémédiable divergence de vues."—*Dernières pensées,* p. 139.

word "universe." Without this conscious limitation, which, because we feel it to be a voluntary intellectual retrenchment, a kind of rein upon the imagination, we personify as a "self-limitation," no conception of class could be operant.

Dedekind's *Schnitt*

Dedekind's solution of the problem of continuity quite consciously rests upon the assumption of *limits,* or limiting values; and what is distinctive of the notion of a "cut" (*Schnitt*) appears to be just that it determines a limit which, so to speak, does not overleap itself, and which consequently gives the base for a self-contained system of values. Every "cut" is, in a sense, a zero, having the particular property that any variable magnitude which approaches the limit loses itself in a value indistinguishable from zero.[14] This, I take it, is also the essential meaning of the *Nul class*—the class of things to which no entity in the (given) universe corresponds; it is essentially a boundary which, because it is empty, cannot be used as a turn or start into continued reasonings.

Transfinite numbers

At least we should suppose that 0-limits could not be so used, but by a kind of transcendental induction just this is attempted. The cardinal number of all finite numbers, which is, of course, infinite, becomes the first transfinite cardinal; and the ordinal ω (ω symbolizes a *progression* modeled on the natural suite 1, 2, 3, . . . n, $n+1$, . . ., and so may be regarded as the generalization or law of the process of ordering sequentially) becomes the first transfinite ordinal. By applying the conception of a transfinite ordinal to transfinite cardinals, it becomes possible to conceive of, and perhaps create, an infinite

[14] *Stetigkeit und irrationale Zahlen,* IV.

series of the latter—transfinites of the order α being followed by those of the order β, and so on. The whole process is reminiscent of Spinoza's assumption of possible infinite attributes, other than thought and extension, of the divine substance, though it seems to want the restraint which left Spinoza content to suggest the possibility, and pass in his philosophizing to the attributive planes with which human experience familiarizes us. By means of such interplays of conception—infinite limiting finite, transfinite limiting infinite—it becomes possible to create whole hierarchies of classes and types, each conclusively including what is below it and conclusively ignoring what is above it. The process is interesting and in its way fruitful, but it is difficult to see how it could be possible except for that self-imposition of limits which distinguish grade from grade and type from type, and it is difficult to see in the imposition any other necessity than the arbitrary will of the thinker. The limits set are limits assumed, and assumed with something of the stark inexplicableness of a primitive tabu—unless we concede that the whole process is a conscious fiction, whose analogue is our empirical concentration of immediate attention on immediate ends.

Spinoza

But besides this external principle of limitation, which makes definable a self-comprehending system, there is another principle of limitation, an internal one, which makes system itself comprehensible. This principle is represented by the idea of *structure* or *form,* without which mathematics and reason alike could not exist. The principle of external limitation might suffice to mark off for us an islet of chaos which we could choose to regard as the universe, but

Internal limitation

only the acknowledgment of internal limitations could convert this chaotic universe into a cosmos.

Now the relationships of ideas according to this principle of internal limitation assume two general forms: that of *part-to-part* and that of *part-to-whole*. It is obvious[15] that each of these is a relation of *order,* and it is also obvious that each is derivative of the idea of *unity* in the two fundamental senses of unity. For the relation of part-to-whole clearly rests upon the contrasting unities of the element, regarded as an undifferentiated item, and the thing, regarded as an assemblage of elements; and the relation of part-to-part, while explicitly concerned only with the relation of item to item, clearly rests upon an implicit whole.[16] Unit and totality, atom and universe, are the two extremes, each of which assumes the mask of unity, and the fact that the atom may be resolved into a universe or the universe contracted

Unity and totality

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15 "Obvious," not to logistic, but to our linguistic intuitions.

16 For the two types of unity, cf. Bergson, *Données immédiates,* pp. 58f. Of course the logisticians categorically deny that the idea of *class* involves that of "part-to-whole." "Socrates is a man" may mean (1) "Socrates possesses the qualities which mark a human being"—and this is the part-to-whole relationship—or (2) "Socrates is one among men,"—and this is the member-to-class relationship, expressed "x is an a" (symbolically, $x \in a$), where x is a member and a a class. The distinction is true enough, and it is also true that only the part-to-whole relationship is "transitive," i. e., subject to syllogistic treatment. But is it not evident that the distinction is fundamentally the very distinction which a philosophy of number is called upon to explain? Reasoning *qualitatively,* i. e., where your terms are taken "by nature," we get judgments of type 1; reasoning *quantitatively,* i. e., with terms taken "in respect to number," we get those of type 2. In judgments of the member-to-class type number is assumed, not definitely as if counted, but indefinitely as if countable. That is, a plurality, which is a totality or aggregate of some sort (in so far as limited by the reasoning undertaken), is at least hypothetically "taken"; and such a plurality is what is meant by a "class" (except in those shadowy extremes where the class has only one member or none at all). But if there is a plurality or aggregate it must have the configuration of just this (whatever it may turn out to be) aggregate which is being dealt with—just the class in question. Such configuration (which we might call the quality of a quantity) is precisely a whole of which the member is a part,—at least, we use "whole" and "part" in this sense in common speech, and it is certainly significant that the logisticians, in denying that "class" has this meaning, are forced to proclaim the term undefinable except by its use—i. e., it is left in a state of empirical ambiguity. Cf. Russell, *Principles,* Chaps. II, VI; also, Burali-Forti and Padoa in Vol. III of *Bibliothèque du Congrès international de Philosophie.*

into an atom by a simple act of speculative translation does not alter the essential character of these two moments of thought.

Contiguity

The relation of part-to-part would, in the world experientially familiar to us, involve the meaning "next-to-next," or contiguity of consecutive elements. This relation is what makes the experiential world finite and incomplete; it is, therefore, felt as a constraint of the pure reason, mathematical or other. But the logisticians have discovered an escape from this restriction, and like Spinoza have found their freedom *sub specie æternitatis*. The instrument of emancipation is the notion of the "one-to-one correspondence"; it is through this that the infinite is resolved into cosmos. The idea is centrally that of the reciprocal uniformity of two groups (classes), such that for every element of the one there is in the other, one, and only one, corresponding element. Two groups or classes so related are said to have the same number, and the infinite is simply a group in which the whole is related to a part of itself in this manner.[17]

One-to-one correspondence

Now the notion of a one-to-one correspondence is clearly metempirical. In real life, we cannot make things correspond absolutely except in absolute identification, i. e., in loss of plurality; all other rela-

[17] The usual illustration is that of the one-to-one correspondence of all the integers with all the even integers, or of the points on a straight line with the points on a plane or, indeed, with all the points in space. Pascal (*De l'esprit géométrique*, sect. 1) gives an entirely analogous type of illustration in his discussion of the two infinities, the infinitely great and the infinitesimally small, each, as it were, a glass of the other. Zero, he says, is the proper indivisible; it is to number what rest is to motion, what an instant is to time; in either direction extend infinite integers and decimals, as correspondent as you please. And Nature, similarly, is as microscopic or as telescopic as your instrument permits; there is one-to-one correspondence between all dimensions; man's normal vision is only a sort of zero section of the visible. Perhaps one should go on—as seems to be Pascal's arrière pensée—to show that man himself, with all his faculties, is but a sort of Zero in the midst of the Universe: that is what we mean by his finitude.

tionships involve some kind of contiguity. Even when we set five fingers against five fingers, what we have empirically is not a one-to-one correspondence of two groups, but right thumb to left thumb, right index to left, and so on; and this holds throughout the empirical universe. The idea of number is, as it were, interposed between the severally adjacent digits, or perhaps I had better say that the groups of five are groups of five because they both (speaking with Plato) "participate" in τὰ μαθηματικά. The correspondence lies between an empirical group which is always finite and incomplete and a metempirical system of numbers (supermundane, if not divine) representing the class of all possible classes. If Spinoza's divine substance, within which all attributes inhere, were to become articulate it would be represented, I conceive, by just such transcendental numbers.

Platonic numbers

But we are not to think of these numbers as severally interdependent. Their reality rests upon no idea of succession. We must think of *decads, duads, monads, triads, tetrads,* etc., not of *one . . . two . . . three . . ., four,* etc. The *order* of the numbers in their own transcendent realm is something superposed upon their cardinal realities—this time by a set of relations which concerns them *inter se*. *Less than, greater than, equal to,* or again *higher* and *lower power,* or again *betweenness* (or "mediacy," since the notion of "between" is significant only when coupled with the idea of transition), are relations of the needed kind. Now each of these sets of conceptions is a variant of the *part-to-whole* relation, of contained and container. This is self-evident in the first-named group. "Less than" and

Transcendental order

Measure

"greater than" obviously rest upon the experiment of mensuration, of reduction to scale, and if the numbers themselves *are* the scale, nevertheless they get their steps or intervals, and hence their *order,* from the experiences whose comparisons they name. A scale may be regarded as made up from the successive remainders in a series of approximations, its fineness being determined by the extent to which the approximations are carried,—which, in last resort, must be a matter of industry or of organic structure, in either case empirical. The relation of equal-

Equality

ity is not so obviously derived from measure, for "equal" may signify not merely identity in step or scale, but also similiformity and equivalence. Nevertheless, when we consider that equivalence is no more than functional identity and that similiformity can be no less than this—that is, that each of these ideas is identity with a reservation—it would seem evident that here too we are dealing with a concept whose final meaning is derived from the part-to-whole relation.

In the case of "higher-lower power" and in the case of "betweenness" the same general relation—part-to-whole—is implicit. Both of these types of expression are derivatives of space-perception; they are geometric in first intention. But as principles of order they have to do not with a static but with a

Direction

dynamic geometry. The notion of direction or sense is the primary one, but the direction exists not as the expression of an orientation but of a progression; not a set of starting-points or markers but a set of journeys is connoted. Thus we have time as well

Time and space

as space involved in the empirical foundation of numerical order so conceived, the complete idea be-

ing the analogue of a movement from any assumed position in any designated direction, the movement being conceived as contained by its determinants. Of course, in the case of "betweenness" this movement may be ideal, and in that case we have merely a case of syllogistic transition, with the "between" represented by the middle term;—but this is simply intellectualizing our journey. Again, the concept of "betweenness" may give rise to right-left, symmetrical-asymmetrical orders; but here, too, we have only special complications of the familiar idea, for right-left are clearly but alternative journeys, a dilemma of roads one or the other of which our action must make real (hence defining the whole);[18] while symmetry and its opposite can hardly be conceived apart from measurement, for indeed the whole notion of proportion is dependent upon some kind of repetition (which again throws us back upon time and space for our analogues).

Motion

Thus the logistic conception of number, starting with the assumption of *class* as the essential numerical idea, proceeds in two directions. (a) Outwardly, it posits a limit or law within which must fall all the elements which make the class a class, capable of structure. And that this outward limitation is made in good faith as essential to the idea is sufficiently evidenced by the recognized possibility of a class including classes, of a class of classes, and finally of the class of all possible classes,—a veritable hierarchy of types of limitation. (*b*) Inwardly, there are posited two types of structural relation which may be described as the principles of internal

Logistic conception of number

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[18] So also "before-after." Past time is commonly thought as a *retreat* from the present, future time as an *advance*.

limitation. These are the relation of part to part and part to whole. From the first is derived that freedom to make comparisons which makes possible —or, *is* the possibility of—the transcendental independence that distinguishes pure number. From the second flows the whole concept of order, and especially the notion of series or progression without which the idea of quantity (i. e., greater-less) could not be.

The One and the Many

If we ask what concepts are fundamental in such a construction, three seem to stand predominant: class, element, relation. But the two first, class and element, are surely no other than the two meanings which we commonly ascribe to unity, while relation is quite as clearly *the* function (and therefore the meaning) of plurality. The *one* and the *many* are thus the fundamentals of number,—and already we seem to be within hailing distance of the Hellenic categories; subject and attribute, thing and quality, are recurrently proximate. Has the Wheel of Time indeed completed its circuit? and is philosophy to begin anew? Or were we perhaps right as to the distinction of temperaments, and is logistic but an exercise of the lovers of Uranian reason?

IV

Secundæ intentiones

At the beginning of this discussion I quoted from Gaston Milhaud a word of caution in regard to that dogmatism which issues from a too naïve confidence in the powers of our understanding, especially when freed, as it is in mathematical logic, to consume its own intentions. I would repeat this caution, having in mind certain developments of this logic based upon the principles already examined.

The Uranian mind

These developments issue from that abstractive freedom which is the especial pitfall of the Uranian mind. When in a given situation a given form is discovered, the statement of this form is what we call the description of the situation, for it is only forms that we can state. But a form so abstracted —and this is the law of our rational life—is invariably made the measure of new situations. The fact that it can never be applied to a new situation except with some more or less accommodating deformation is a fact which we customarily and conveniently neglect, or if we remember it, it is only for the sake of abstracting from the more comprehensive situation given by the group of deformations a new form of forms which shall serve in its turn for the first of a series of modifications of some super-form of forms, and so on;—i. e., our pragmatic thinking, as it becomes clogged by the impertinencies of fact, is clarified by being transmuted into a rote of "second intentions" grouped by our interests; and these, again, are the entelechies of still higher formal orders, ordained by interests yet more remote; whence, we may presume, the Idea of Ideas breathlessly emerges as we pass above the sphere which bounds our empyrean.

Modes of transcending unity

Now there are two modes in which this process is applied in the logistic analysis of number, corresponding to the two types of relation of a class to its limits which we have heretofore stated. These two modes might be described as the modes of external and internal transcendence of unity.

The first of these, the external transcendence, is effected by analogical reasoning the base of which is the so-called "natural" suite of numbers, the succes-

External transcendence

sion of positive integers 1, 2, 3 . . . n, $n+1$, . . . Now the number which is the infinite number of such integers, is ω; but ω is yet more,—ω is also *the principle of description which is immanent in the natural numbers naturally arranged;* it is the principle of numerical order as evinced in one-to-one correspondences, and so is the key to the analysis of all denumerable groups. The postulates underlying descriptions of the type ω are (*a*) the postulates of *linear order,* and (*b*) postulates of *sequence*—Dedekind's for example. From the combination of these two ideas issues the conception of a discrete series, though when we consider that the first of these is symbolized merely by the idea of inequality ($<,>$), i. e., by quantity, and the second by that of *limit,* i. e., by class, it does not appear that "discrete series" spells much more than "whole numbers." Nevertheless, as symbolized in ω it becomes the beginning of a transfinite hierarchy of orders; for it is the principle (or, shall I say, the analogy) of the suite of finite numbers which sets in order the houses of the infinite,—there the last becomes first, Omega the prior of Alpha, and the unity of the finite integers is transcended by numbers α_ν reaching to the order 2ω, while beyond this we may suspect yet more transcendent orders of hyper-alphas.

Internal transcendence

But this external transcendence of unity is complemented by an internal transcendence; there is not only a metempirical macrocosmos, but a metempirical microcosmos. This is shown forth when in the description of order the notion of sequence is replaced by that of *betweenness,* or mediacy, which is to be conceived as a kind of eternal negation of next-to-nextness without loss of plurality. There

are two kinds of numerical order exemplifying this internal transcendency. When a series is endlessly linear and yet endlessly median, i. e., when it has no beginning nor middle nor end but only and always a median term between any two terms, it is *dense*. When a series is limitedly linear but has no middle term, it is *continuous*. The endless fractioning of a difference in a process of approximation—as, for example, the endless interstitial fractions required to complete the suite of all rational numbers—is image of the dense series; the clogging of an interval by the sum of its own possibilities is the image of the continuous series—for example, the series $\geqq 0 \ldots\ldots \leqq 1$ is fulfilled by the aggregate of numbers rational and irrational there comprised. Series of each of these types are transfinite; but there is an important difference in structure between them, for only the dense series is denumerable (i. e., figurable by the progression of positive integers), while only the continuum is susceptible of ratio and of measure, for it alone has limit. Of course the dense series is only metempirically countable and the continuous series measurable only metempirically, so that to note that we seem to have here naught but a transcendentalizing of the Aristotelian πλῆθος and μέγεθος, plurality and magnitude, is to suggest an empirical meaning for what is by definition beyond experience.

Dense and continuous series

Metaphysics 1020a

And yet is this suggestion without reason? The transcendentalities of logistic are accomplished in two directions, which might be termed the gross anatomy and the histological analysis of the number-corpus; and yet, in order that the directions may be meaningful, must we not recognize some proximate and experimental greater-less which is the *here*

from which we orient these directions? This seems clearly implied by the important rôle played by the conception of the suite of "natural" numbers, and again by that of the line, in the representation of order. Very likely it is true that finite numbers cannot be satisfactorily defined except in relation to transfinite classes, but can the transfinite be defined without first assuming the finite? As a matter of fact, the transfinite orders seem all to be got by a process of progressive abstraction and recombination of qualities assumed on the analogy of the natural numbers; it is as if, by a cunning complexity of mirrors, the natural suite were made to suffer indefinite distortions, variously deforming its native properties and translating them from plane to plane and from space to space in a succession of *saltus,* as many as one has patience for.[19]

Natural numbers and the transfinite

The process is legitimate enough if we be not duped by its parlous illusions. That is, we must preserve our sanity (which is nothing less than our common-sense faith in our common-sense intuitions); and for this I can conceive no better rules

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[19] This right of saltation is clearly the foundation of the conception of transfinity. "In recent times there is arisen, in geometry and in particular in the theory of functions, a new type of conception of the infinite; according to these new notions, in the study of an analytic function of a complex variable magnitude usage calls for the representation, in the plane which represents the complex variable, of a unique point situated in the infinite, that is to say, infinitely distant, but nevertheless determined, and for the examination of the manner in which this function comports itself in the neighborhood of this absolute point as in the neighborhood of any point whatever. It is seen then that the function in the neighborhood of the point infinitely remote acts precisely as it would act in that of every other point located in the finite, so that one is fully authorized in this case to represent the infinite as transported to a point altogether determined. When the infinite is presented in a form thus determined, I call it *infinite properly so-called.*"—G. Cantor, *Acta Mathematica,* 2, p. 382. Poincaré founds his conception of dimension upon the notion of the "cut" (*Dernières pensées,* p. 65; *La valeur de la science,* pp. 97f), which, since it implies a new law in each new location, seems a more legitimate use of the right (or intuitive power, as Poincaré would make it) of overleaping boundaries ideally set. Plato's conception of the cosmos as made up of intervals and limits held together by proportion is not far from this (*Timæus,* 35-36, 53-57; cf. *Philebus,* 14*c*-27*b*).

than are implied in Aristotle's dicta (1) that when we speak with reason we must say something with a communicable meaning, and (2) that "third man" abstractions are wasted breaths.[20] The first of these is a pragmatic statement of the law of contradiction applied to discourse; the second is a caution against the tautology involved in the regress to infinity. If we adhere to the first we cannot shift our perspective (say, from finite to transfinite) without distortion of meaning, i. e., without altering our predication; if we adhere to the second we cannot make abstractions of abstractions without losing reality altogether.

Aristotle's criteria of common-sense

Now it would seem that logistic fearlessly invites both of these perils. In the description of classes, for example, the forms of expression travesty the sense of language. For what can be the common-sense, linguistic meaning of a *Nul-class,* which must be described as that class which contains no element, or as that of which the universe (of discourse) furnishes no instance? Or again, by what right of speech may we speak of the class a as the "class" which contains only a? In the first of these cases we are using the language of plurality about nothing, and in the second about one. And if we go a step further and speak of x' as the sole element of the class whose sole member is x, is this more than a vicious play upon the conception of part and whole?[21] Beyond this there is the x'' which is the sole content of the class whose sole element is x', —and we are fairly launched in the infinite tautologies of the "third man."

Logistic and the "third man"

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20 *Metaph.*, 1006*a*.

21 Perhaps I should mention that Burali-Forti *et al.* make distinction between "is an element of" and "is contained by."

Symbolism

Formal refinements of analysis, when freed from the leadings of empirical need, may defeat the very end of analysis. Thought becomes not purified, but anæmic; in a world of ideas where not only is language replaced by symbols, but these by symbols of symbols, all linguistically ineffable, it is small wonder that identities and the sense for the law of identity vanish away, so that no longer, in order to reason, do we need to speak significantly as Aristotle would require, nor indeed to speak at all. And with the disappearance of identities from this analytic attrition, it is but to be expected that there will emerge that "liberty of contradiction"[22] which solves infinity by denying sense and confounds truth with paradox. The ultimate reason of the world becomes a relation of relations which, if it could say anything, would say just that the world exists, catholically comprehensive of all contradictions, but which, since it is unutterable, is in so far inferior to the sacred monosyllable *Om*.

Nonsensical assertions

I am quite willing to agree that there is a sense in which this world is the best possible world, and indeed a sense in which it is the only possible world, and even a sense in which it is all possible worlds,—but when I have got so far I begin to suspect that I am being duped by my own tongue and I deem it the modesty of reason to conserve my breath. Is there no like nonsensicality in the refutation of the axiom that the whole is greater than the part? And have we made "infinity" a more usable notion (I will not say in logistic, but in reason)[23] because we can juggle a part into a

[22] Cf. Poincaré, *Science et méthode*, pp. 195f.

[23] I seem to discern among the logisticians themselves, when they are speaking the language of philosophy, a tendency to employ the idea

kind of equality with its whole by nominalizing our definitions? Common sense, we may be sure, will be slow to relinquish the intuitions upon which it acts; and will not our humaner reason itself, when it meets contradiction assuming the guise of infallible truth, begin to suspect that the ghosts of Duns and Occam are coruscating behind the scenes?

Ghosts of Duns and Occam

V

The attempts of the logisticians to define number by the unaided agilities of the reason are, in the end, little more satisfying than is the confident empiricism of Locke. No one can question their demonstrations, granted their premises; but no one, in the right mind of common sense, can grant the premises. It is incumbent upon us, then, to ask whether logistic has, after all, quite so efficiently scotched the particular theory whose downfall it proclaims,—I mean the intuitionism especially associated with the name of Kant.

Kantian intuition

"The pure form of all quantities for the outer sense," says Kant,[24] "is space; the pure form of objects of sense in general is time. But the pure *schema of quantity,* as a concept of the understand-

Category of quantity

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of what Cantor terms "the infinite improperly so called" in place of that "properly-called" logistic infinite which could hardly be expected to convey an intelligible idea when severed from its nominalistic illustrations. And speaking of these illustrations, why should we stop with an infinite whose part equals its whole? Suppose we define Chaos as a nul-class ($X=0$), and Cosmos as the class of all ordered classes, infinite in number ($K=\omega$). Then *τὸ ὅλον*, the Whole, (H), will be equal to a part of itself, a logistic infinity ($X+K=H$, or, $0+\omega=\omega$). But suppose, in addition to infinite K, the Demiurge (since that is his business) determine other ordered classes (K′), as many as he may choose. K′ will belong to K, as being ordered classes, but cannot add to the number of K which is infinite, nor to H with which K is already in a complete one-to-one correspondence. Then $K(=K+K') > H(=K+X)$, and the part is greater than the whole. Of course this is a play upon the idea of progression in time; perhaps none the less a fair image of the course of reason,—though "I hold it not honesty to have it thus set down."

[24] *Kritik der reinen Vernunft,* 182.

ing, is *number,* which is a representation conceptually combining the successive addition of unit to like unit. Thus number is nothing other than the unity of the synthesis of the manifold of a homogeneous intuition in general, in that time itself is engendered in the apprehension of the intuition."

Thus for Kant "unity in the apprehension of a manifold" and "time," the empirical image of an *a priori* schema, are the fundamentals of the idea of number. We shall be not far wrong in identifying here the notions of unity, multiplicity, and serial order, which are primitive with Locke and are unevaded by the logisticians. But Kant puts these notions in a somewhat new light: they are no longer *bloss empirisch,* as with Locke, nor are they circuitously inferred from nominalistic definitions; rather, they come into being as elements of that synthetic activity which is the dominant mark of mind. Number is, in this sense, neither empirical nor quite metempirical. The categories of the understanding lie behind the numerical schema, but the schema itself is "only the phenomenon or sensible concept of an object in agreement with the category." Further, this schema—as indeed are schemata in general—is only the *a priori* determination of temporal intuitions, getting its content not through analytic but through æsthetic transcendentalities. Indeed, one is tempted to say that Kant, like Plato, puts his mathematical realities in a kind of mid-realm participating at once in νοῦς and αἴσθησις.

Synthetic activity of mind

The unique position of the number idea appears again in Kant's discussion of the formation of determinate numbers. Judgments of numerical rela-

tions, he says, are certainly *a priori* syntheses, but they are not, like the underlying principles of geometry, universal in character. Accordingly, they are to be termed *number-formulas* (*Zahl-formeln*), not axioms, and they are endless in number, i. e., as many as numbers themselves.[25] Kant conceives the formative judgments as synthetic apprehensions of aggregations of units. In their generation we may make use of sensible intuitions, as in computing by aid of the fingers, but the actual realization of a sum would be impossible apart from the *a priori* schema. "The arithmetical judgment is always synthetic, as may the better appear when we consider the larger numbers; for it is then clearly evident that, apply our concepts as we will, without the help of intuition, by mere conceptual division into elements, we can never discover a sum."[26]

Number formulas

Couturat retorts upon Kant that it is practically impossible to have precise and complete intuitions of numbers of the order of millions, and that these could never be calculated exactly if recourse to intuition were necessary. "What is true of the large numbers," he continues, "is true also of the small, and consequently it is not intuition but reason that enables us to say that 2 and 2 make 4."[27] Evidently Couturat overlooks the case of the phenomenal calculator who handles millions as the average mortal handles units, and without being able to analyze the process; or again, the undoubted fact that the average civilized man would be a mathematical prodigy to the average primitive. And again, it is not easy to see that there is a more

Couturat's criticism

[25] *K. d. r. V.*, 205-6.
[26] *Ibid.*, 15-16.
[27] L. Couturat, *Les principes des mathématiques*, p. 256.

excessive dogmatism in assuming that our intuitions of the great numbers are in character with our intuitions of the small, than in asserting that because we have no intuitions of the great (supposing this true) we can therefore have none of the small,—which is Couturat's position.

Kant's masked empiricism

Nevertheless, there is justice in Couturat's criticisms, especially to the effect that Kant's notion of "number formulas," calling as it does for an infinity of irreducible synthetic insights, ill conforms to our notion of rationality, and is, indeed, only a masked intrusion of the old empirical view of number. The difficulty with Kant's view is that the number syntheses reduce to no law, and this offends our sense of the reasonable, hyper-conscious as it is when touched on the side of mathematics. Kant's *a priori* synthesis is after all only a designation, and, as Poincaré says, to christen a difficulty is not to solve it.

Poincaré

Poincaré's own view—which may be described as Kantian with a saving salt of empiricism—is an interesting variation. The foundation of the idea of number is mathematical induction, and the essence of mathematical induction is reasoning by recurrence, while reasoning by recurrence has for its proper character just that "it contains, as it were condensed into a single formula, an infinity of syllogisms." Such a rule cannot come to us from experience; experience can show it to hold for a limited portion, but only for a limited portion, of the endless suite of numbers. If it were a matter only of this limited portion the principle of contradiction would suffice, permitting us to develop as many syllogisms as we wish; but when it comes

to embracing an infinity in a single formula, when the infinite is in question, then this principle fails, and it is just here too that experience is impotent. The rule of recurrence, "inaccessible alike to analytic demonstration and to experience, is the veritable type of the synthetic judgment *a priori.*"[28]

The mind's own power

Why, then, Poincaré asks, does such a form of judgment impose itself upon us so irresistibly? "Because it is only the affirmation of the power of the mind which knows itself capable of conceiving the indefinite repetition of an act once this act is found possible. The mind has a direct intuition of this power; experience can be only an occasion for making use of it and hence of becoming conscious of it."

Inventive judgment

But there is another and an important feature of reasoning by recurrence which Poincaré emphasizes, and this is the *inventive* character of its judgments. They are not only intuitive, born of the nature of the mind, they are also creative; and indeed it is mathematical induction alone which can apprise us of the new. Each number, then, is to be looked upon as an invention—not due to physical experience, but a self-discovery of the mind. But invention and the self-discovery of the mind do not cease so long as life lasts; and so, says Poincaré in another connection,[29] "when I speak of all the whole numbers, I mean by that all the whole numbers that have been discovered and will one day be discovered. . . . . And it is just this *possibility* of discovery that is the infinite."

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[28] *La science et l'hypothèse,* Chap. I. Cf. p. 37: "Nous avons la faculté de concevoir qu'une unité peut être ajoutée à une collection d'unités; c'est grâce à l'expérience que nous avons l'occasion d'exercer cette faculté et que nous en prenons conscience: mais, dès ce moment, nous sentons que notre pouvoir n'a pas de limite et que nous pourrions compter indéfiniment, quoique nous n'ayons jamais eu à compter qu'un nombre fini d'objets."

[29] *Dernières pensées,* p. 131.

Psychological empiricism

The psychological temper of this view is apparent; in so far it is empirical. But the validity of mathematical judgments is independent of the vagaries of experience; it is derived from the structure of the mind rather than from the accidents of a conscious life, and in so far the judgments are *a priori* and metempirical. Whether mathematical truths represent not only the organization of mind but also the organization of nature is an epistemological question for which Poincaré suggests an interesting answer, but it is properly a question, not of mathematics, but of metaphysics.

Bergson

Analogous to Poincaré's view is that of Bergson, which also must be regarded as Kantian in type. Bergson begins his analysis of the number concept with the categories of unity and multiplicity: every individual number is to be regarded as a ratio between the one and the many, unit and totality. "There are two species of unity," writes Bergson,[30] "the one definitive, which will form a number in adding itself to itself; the other provisional, that of this number which, in itself multiple, borrows its unity from the simple act by which the intelligence perceives it. And it is undeniable that when we image to ourselves the unitary components of the number we believe ourselves to be thinking of indivisibles, this belief entering as a considerable factor in the notion that we can conceive number apart from space. In every case, viewing the matter more nearly, we shall see that each unity is that of a simple act of the mind, and that, this act consisting in uniting, it is necessary that some multiplicity serve as its matter."

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[30] *Les données immédiates de la conscience,* pp. 58-65.

Unity subjective; multiplicity objective

The two poles of the idea of number, unity and multiplicity, correspond in Bergson's view to the subjective and objective elements of experience,—ultimately and respectively to time and space, use and generation. "You can never draw from an idea which you have constructed more than you have put into it, and if the unity with which you compose your number is the unity of an act and not of an object, no effort of analysis can evoke from it more than unity pure and simple. Without doubt when you equate the number 3 to the sum of $1 + 1 + 1$, nothing prevents you from holding as indivisible the units which compose it, but this is because you do not utilize the multiplicity with which each of these units is big. It is, moreover, probable that the number 3 presents itself to our mind in this simple form, because we are thinking rather of the manner in which we obtained it than of the use we can make of it. But we ought to see that if all multiplication implies the possibility of treating any number soever as a provisional unity which will add itself to itself, inversely the units in their turn are veritable numbers as great as one may wish, though one provisionally assumes them to be indecomposable in order to combine them *inter se*. Moreover, by the very fact that the possibility of dividing unity into as many parts as are desired is admitted it is regarded as extended." In fine: "What properly pertains to the mind is the indivisible process by which it fixes attention successively upon the diverse parts of a given space; but the parts thus isolated are conserved in order to be added to others, and once added among themselves they are open to a new decomposition of whatever

sort. They are then parts of space, and space is the matter with which the mind constructs number, the milieu in which the mind places it."

Numbers are ratios

Thus in the Bergsonian view numbers are ratios mediating time and space. The order in which they fall is first of all the order in which achieved experience presents itself, i. e., it is spatial. But space-perceptions are all provisional in character; consequently numbers are all provisional in character. Numerical order is not continuous, but composed *per saltum* ("par sauts brusques"); we form our numbers turn by turn, each assuming the character of a mathematical point separated by an interval of space from the point following, but as we recede in our series from the points first formed these tend to unite into a line, their synthesis being the necessary consequence of our averted attention. But "once formed according to a determinate law, the number is decomposable according to any law whatever"; and here we reach the apparent freedom and apriority of the mathematical reason, a number in course of formation is not the same as a number once formed; it is only the latter that is really divisible.

Bergsonian intuition

Doubtless to minds enamored of the eternal, Bergson's view will seem a veritable anarchy; perhaps metaphysically it is so; but it can hardly be denied that it gives a fair description of the manner in which we actually learn and apply our numbers, and it gives also an intelligibility to the old-fashioned notion that number is generated by successive acts of attention which the old-fashioned explanations do not possess. This is due, of course, to the assumption of an intuitive reason, differing from

Kant's—as does Poincaré's—chiefly in its more direct reliance upon the course of conscious events, upon psychology conceived as mental history.

Bergson and Plato

Nor is it altogether fanciful to see in Bergson's view a striking analogue of Plato's. Like Plato he conceives number as essentially a ratio. Like Plato he conceives the realm of numbers as a median realm, uniting the one and the many, participating in the one direction in the essential unity of thought, in the other expressing itself as the multiplicity of things. Number is the category which unites subjective and objective, ideal and material,—or in Bergsonian terms, time and space.

VI

Logic, Psychology, Epistemology

The types of definition of number which we have been considering raise certain inevitable issues—none more inevitable than the question of the relation of psychology to logic, and of both these sciences to epistemology.

Genesis of number-concept

If we contrast the older empirical conception of number with the logistic view, we see at once that the former defines number from the point of departure of number genesis while the latter analyzes its nature irrespective of its origins. From this we may guess both the reason for the dependence of the older conception upon the act of counting, in the definition of number, and the reason for the aversion to counting (for their denials of its significance amounts to this) on the part of the logisticians. For there can be no question that, historically considered, the invention of counting is the beginning of a science of number; nor again, that a study of the number-systems of primitive peoples, and in-

deed of the civilized, yield a direct insight into the modes in which numbers are thought. The psychology of number-consciousness is, therefore, a direct key to our mathematical use of numbers.

But is there another and more efficient key, not perhaps explaining the nature of our consciousness of numbers, but explaining why they are found to be applicable to experience or even susceptible of metempirical developments? To this question the logisticians respond with a various affirmative, "various" because, while for some logistic is a purely nominalistic science (or, more correctly, purely algorithmic), for others it is the clue to a realism transcending the fictions which impair all empirically originated speech.

Uranian and Pandemian reason

It must be owned that there is a kind of experiential warrant for each of these views—the Uranian as well as the Pandemian. For if the latter can appeal to the universal conformity of number notions in process of formation, to our physical and mental structure and needs, the Uranian reason can retort with the universal and seemingly superhuman validity of mathematics. Mathematical demonstrations need only to be understood in order to be convincing, and if there be such a thing as infallibility there can be no test for it save this. From such infallibility the Uranian may infer, with a show of force, that number is not the product of our experience, but is imposed on us by the structure of the universe. Mathematical truth is, at all events, more universal than anything else we know.

But this is a doctrine, not of logic, but of epistemology. Uranians do not like the word,—it has

psychological associations. They prefer to mark their own science as at once hyper-psychological, hyper-epistemological, hyper-logical—a science which can have no name, since every name is contaminated with the experiential (humanly experiential) references of language. They aim rather at a system of symbols which shall be untalkable, though catholic of the meanings of speech as well as of all other meanings;[31] they would introduce us into a sphere where human relations and merely human thinking are merged into the crystalline structure of the de-reified reality of a cosmos transcending speech.

Epistemology

"Extravagant realism" is the only historic caption that can fit this point of view, and extravagant realism is the philosophical creed which Russell at least is ready to make his own.[32] That some adherents of the movement balk at this is no matter of surprise; but surely it is with ill reason, for the philosophic alternative which is left them is a nominalism without even the consolations of speech. When symbols are refined to such an extent that they are but the symbols of systems of unutterable ideas, whose generality outgeneralizes nature, then surely their inventors are worse than dumb; they have become cousin-german to the apostles of the

Extravagant Realism

Scepticism

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31 I can imagine no more downright statement of the point of view than that of A. Padoa (*Bibliothèque du Congrès International de Philosophie,* 1901, Vol. III, pp. 317f.). Surely, when we are told that science is the peril of logic, that reasoning in order to be safe must be empty, we may well draw heretical breaths!

32 Cf. *Monist,* October, 1914; and *Scientific Method in Philosophy,* pp. 200-202, where Russell follows Frege (and Plato) in postulating a mathematical *tertium quid,* a reality neither mental nor physical, at once objective and non-sensible. However, this reality readily fades into the ever-threatening nominalism: the mathematicals have nothing to do with history or things; "nothing that can be said significantly about things, i. e., particulars, can be said about classes of things,"—and numbers are classes.

flux, and, with Cratylus, nothing is left them but to wag impotent digits.

When the rigorous following out of the mathematical reason leads to such extreme views, we may well bear in mind M. Milhaud's caution against a too naïve confidence in the dogmatisms of our understanding. We may well ask by what right (since it is from no definable experience) transcendental realism justifies its *ex cathedra* affirmations; or, with Poincaré, what value is to be attached to a symbolism so ineffable that no testimony of familiar fact can sustain it. And we will surely be led to inquire if there be not some secure middle way, satisfying at once to our reason and our sense.

Moderate realism

Now it would be presumption to affirm that the Kantian view—which we might term the "moderate realism" of the development—even as amended by Poincaré and Bergson is wholly satisfying. There are unquietable difficulties besetting every relativism, and these become accentuated when the relativity is between such extreme factors as reason and sensibility. It is far more comfortable to fashion a shapely abode of ideas of a single order and name it intellect than to be faithful to all the factors that enter into the cognizable world; nevertheless, it is only with this inclusive faithfulness at once to fact and to reason that temperaments of a certain kind can find their rest.

Merit of neo-Kantian view

Herein is the merit of the neo-Kantian view. It sees the crudities of the old naïve empiricism quite as clearly as do the logisticians; but for all that it is unwilling to abandon empirical leadings or to deny the centrality of our human experience, for mathematical as for all other meanings. Indeed,

it asks, and asks fairly, of the logisticians by what right they assume that the numbers and measures that tell and mete the physical world are only illustrative cases to be subsumed under some cosmic Number, super-human and supra-mundane. Why, for example, is "the suite of *natural* numbers," so named, and why made the model for the conceptualization of all other series, if it be not due to some greater intimacy of nature which number has with this suite than with the others?

Natural numbers

Referring to the arithmetical definition of continuity Poincaré says:[33] "This definition makes a ready disposal of the intuitive origin of the notion of continuity, and of all the riches which this notion conceals. It returns to the type of those definitions—so frequent in mathematics since the tendency to arithmetize this science—definitions mathematically sound, but philosophically unsatisfying. They replace the objects to be defined and the intuitive notion of this object by a construction made of simpler materials; one sees indeed that one can effectively make this construction with these materials, but one sees also that one can make many others. What is not to be seen is the deeper reason why one assembles these materials in just this, and not in another fashion." And again:[34] "Among all the constructions that one can make with the materials furnished by logic, a choice must be made; the true geometer makes this choice judiciously because he is guided by a sure instinct, or by some vague consciousness of I know not what geometry more profound and more hidden, which alone makes the value of the edifice built." This was surely also

The deeper reason

[33] *Dernières pensées*, p. 65. [34] *Science et méthode*, p. 158.

Pascal on the geometric mind

Pascal's point (*De l'esprit géométrique*) where he justifies the axiomatic foundations of geometry by the very fact that they are clearer than definition,—which can but yield the crude nominalism of communication. Geometry is concerned "only with the simplest things; that very quality which makes them worthy of being its objects renders them incapable of definition; so that the lack of definition is rather a perfection than a defect, for it comes not from their obscurity but from their extreme evidence." The relation of the "natural" numbers to human nature and to the nature of things is doubtless of the same elemental kind; it is, at least, psychologically obvious, and is guided, as Poincaré indicates, by an intellectual instinct. Of course, to reverse Pascal's aphorism, a man might readily be a "good geometer" in the formal mode and still not turn out to be the "très-habile" man, instinctively gifted to see this.

The problem of philosophy

There is a sense, as we have said, in which the world *is* all possible worlds; but there is a commoner and more valuable sense according to which the world we call real is only one among many possible worlds. The problem at once of philosophy and of all rational life is to tell us just what this unique reality is, why the materials of creation have been assembled in just this, and not in another fashion.[35]

[35] This is the problem which Russell, as his own profession of philosophic faith, formally repudiates. Neither mathematics nor philosophy, he avers, "asserts propositions which, like those of history and geography, depend upon the actual concrete facts being just what they are. . . Any quality, therefore, by which our actual world is distinguished from other abstractly possible worlds, must be ignored by mathematics and philosophy alike."—*Scientific Method in Philosophy*, p. 186. So far as philosophy is concerned, its historical content refutes this: its problems began with astronomy and physics and have vastly revolved about questions of man's actual destinies. As for mathematics, its arithmetic is *au fond* the digits of our limbs, its geometry their motions.

Both Poincaré and Bergson recognize in mathematical reasoning a power or enterprise of the spirit which is in some sense prior to experience. It is in this that they are Kantians. This power, or intuition as they agree in calling it, gives to mathematical truths their sanctioning validity. But the validity of mathematics is not supposed, as with the logisticians, to derive from a firmament above the firmament; it holds only within the ranges of human insight, and indeed it is the definition of the utmost reach of this insight. "When I speak of all the whole numbers, I mean by that all the whole numbers that have been discovered and will one day be discovered. . . . And it is just this possibility of discovery that is the infinite," says Poincaré. If I read Bergson aright, I judge his conception of the unity of living time, within which number is generated in the perception of differences, to be not radically divergent from Poincaré's meaning; and certainly their common view squares with the kind of interpretation which language can give of number, and which the ordinarily thoughtful intelligence can accept.

Intuition in mathematics

Nor do I hesitate to add that its metaphysical implications are rich and profound. For a view of number which, while holding it within the leash of human experience makes of it the measure of our expectation of life, is surely sufficiently grandiose for any imagination, if it seem to make that expectation infinite. The intuition which gives the sanction becomes the testimony to a truth in number transcending the facts to which it is applied—that is, the little range of life here present—though not transcending the possibilities of real experience.

Metaphysical implications

Truth transcending fact

Plato found in mathematical intuitions recollections from a previous life of the intelligence, Bergson and Poincaré treat them rather as prophecies of life to come; but these are only variations of a common doctrine.

X. PLATO'S CONCEPTION OF THE COSMOS

I

"PYTHAGORAS was the first," says Plutarch, "who named the compass of the whole a Cosmos, because of the order which is in it."

Idea of World

The notion that all things knowable and all things existent form one orderly and comprehensive system, in which every event is linked with every other by causal necessity while all the elements with mechanical nicety mutually enmesh, is to us of today an intellectual commonplace. We make no difficulty in thinking an Everything which is made up of all things, an Entirety or a Totality which is just the commingled sum of the numberless particularities which our lives are always itemizing; and we call this Totality, this All, this Thing of things, the Universe or the World. It rarely occurs to us to question either the unity or the reality of this omnium-gatherum, which, even if it occupies a somewhat concealed position in our thoughts, is yet a well-nigh indispensable convenience; it stands an ever-ready and capacious receptacle for all the perplexities and inconsistencies which the apparent nature of things is constantly presenting, but which, we feel, are in some benign way healed by the alchemical mystery of an all-inclusive World.

Thing of things

Ideas are habits; and when an idea gets so fixed that the habit has become automatic, it is usually good medicine to revive, now and again the habit-

forming period, that we may judge with refreshed intelligence the safety and truth of our continued course. This is our purpose in turning to certain Greek conceptions of the world as a cosmos.

Greek epithets

For we must remember that the notion, so familiar to us, of what they variously called τὸ πᾶν, the All, or τὸ ὅλον, the Whole, or again ὁ οὐρανός, the Heaven, or ὁ κόσμος, the Order of Things, was to the Greeks a new invention. The idea that all things are somehow one is by no means self-evident, and when it was suggested the wary Hellenic mind approached it with canny suspicion and cautious circumlocution. Is the World limited or unlimited? Is it truly One or is it Many? Does the Whole, or Totality exhaust the All? Or indeed may not the All indefinitely transcend the Realm of Order, the Cosmos? These were questions which were raised and discussed—questions with a dangerous smack of impiety—by the men who were interested in what Xenophon characterizes as "that which is called by sophists 'the world.' "

Pythagoras

Doubtless it was Pythagoras, as Plutarch states, or some Pythagorean, who first daringly pronounced the Whole to be a Cosmos, the realm of reality and the realm of order to be co-extensive. For the Pythagoreans were the earliest of men to be entirely enamored of that first principle and foundation of law and order, the idea of number. They devoted themselves to mathematics and music and astronomy, and in the numerical analogies which they discovered in the properties of sound and in the movements of the heavenly bodies there burst upon their minds, with what must have seemed a very blaze of creative intelligence, the great conception

Number in Nature

of number in nature, which has since been the foundation of all our science. They conceived all nature to be organized according to mathematical proportions, and because they found these proportions to be most emblematically realized in musical strings and pipes they named the principle of it a harmony, and again because they seemed to see it regnantly imaged in the motions of the heavenly spheres they regarded these too as a harmony and a music. It was indeed primarily to the heavens that the name Cosmos was given, and it was only later, when the seasons of Earth were observed to follow the periods of the Sun while the figures of the stars were regarded as prognostics of human events, that the conception of order was extended from celestial to terrestrial phenomena.

Mythic pluralism

The background of Hellenic thought, like the natural thought of mankind everywhere, was pluralistic. To the normal Greek, even in the days of Plato and Aristotle, the obvious facts of life indicated not a consistent and close-locked universal scheme, but a *mêlée* of whim and purpose, blind chance and blinder fancy, while the most reasonless of all the powers he recognized was that to which he gave the name Necessity. To him it seemed evident that the affairs of men and nature are innumerable and unorganized, and while certain of the more stable aspects of existence were regarded as the charge of the Olympian gods, not even such mercurial control as emanated from the hoydenish family of Zeus divine obtained in the generality of experience; the vast majority of events were not to be explained at all; they were simply the manifestation of the hostility, indifference, idiosyncracy

and anarchy which appear in the elemental facts of life.

This, I say, was the view of the normal Greek even in his classical hey-dey, as it is the view of the naïve and natural man everywhere. But the foundations of our own sophisticated philosophy had been set long before, in two first conditions which, as I see it, go far to account for the whole edifice of reason.

Unity a form of thought

One of these is a psychological condition. It is what is known in Kantian philosophy as the "unity of apperception" and in scientific method as the "law of parcimony," or economy of thought. Essentially it is just our native simple-mindedness, expressed in the maxim, "Attend to one thing at a time." Intellectually we are unable to cope with complex facts; we have to simplify them, analyze them, in order to see them. Hence we regard simplicity as the supreme virtue, not only in reason but also in nature; and hence also our invincible conviction that reason's simplifications are more genuine than nature's empirical complexities. In spite of its multitudinous and multiplying variety the very limitations of our intellectual powers compel us to see Nature as one, as a unity, and thus out of chaos is created an orderly world.

Nature's opposites

Such is the inner condition, but it is mightily helped outwardly by the natural allegory of Sky and Earth, Day and Night, Summer and Winter. These antitheticals seem to form a great division of Nature into the Intelligible and the Unintelligible; Sky and Day and Summer not only symbolize but embody motion and light and life, which are in turn the image and essence of reason; while Earth

and Night and Winter no less surely body forth the inert and void and deathly realm of anti-reason. Thus we have a realm of order, Cosmos, set over against a realm of disorder, a Chaos; and because the orderly Sky images the rulership of reason, and because Day is the revealer and Summer the life-giver, these powers are regarded as friendly to man and in the great contention of Nature as encroaching upon and subduing the dark forces of Chaos.

Poetic dualities

Such a sense of duality is omnipresent in human thought. Its metaphors are the very breath of life of poetry, and even in philosophies which deny its reality the problems to which it gives rise—problems of the formal and material, spiritual and physical, good and evil,—are the crucial perplexities. Greek thought is no exception to the rule. Already in the epic theogonies Uranus and Gaea, Sky and Earth, appear as ancestral and gigantic forms of creation emerging from primeval chaos. . .

Hesiod

"First Chaos was, and then broad-bosomed Earth . . .
And Earth bare starry Heaven, thence to be
The habitation of the blessed gods."

This is the Hesiodic genesis, and the Orphic differs from it only in making Heaven and Earth a co-equal and wedded pair, from whose union multitudinous nature was begotten. Euripides preserves it in the utterance of the seeress Melanippe:

Euripides

"It is not my word, but my mother's word,
How Heaven and Earth were once one form; but stirred,
And strove, and dwelt asunder far away:
And then, re-wedding, bore unto the day
And light of life all things that are, the trees,
Flowers, birds and beasts and them that breathe the seas,
And mortal man, each in his kind and law." [1]

[1] Gilbert Murray's translation.

Early cosmology

This dualism of the epic age passed over into the philosophic tradition with little more than a change of names. In place of Heaven and Earth, the antithesis is set between Chaos and Nous, Anarchy and Intelligence, or between Chaos and Cosmos, Void and Order,—though we must remember that the word οὐρανός persisted as a synonym of κόσμος even with Plato and Aristotle, and that κόσμος itself was at first used of the heavenly firmament, and only with advancing insight into the orderliness of the world beneath the spheres was it made to include terrene nature.

Astronomy

The lesson of intelligence was in fact learned first of all from observation of the heavens. No phenomena so vividly impress the natural mind with a sense of their divinity as do the regular and brilliant courses of the heavenly bodies. Repetition is the gateway and light is the outer image of learning, and in the sun and moon and stars we have our permanent exemplars of repetition and light.

> "All mankind thou guidest as a single being;
> Expectantly, with raised head, they look up to thee!"

says a Babylonian hymn to the sun, for which the nineteenth psalm—

> "The Heavens declare the glory of God,
> And the firmament sheweth his handywork"—

Timæus, 40

is only a later parallel. Plato, in describing the works of the Demiurge, tells how "of the heavenly and divine, he created the greater part out of fire, that they might be the brightest of all things and fairest to behold, and he fashioned them after the likeness of the universe in the figure of a circle, and made them follow the intelligent motion of

the supreme, distributing them over the whole circumference of heaven, which was to be a true cosmos or glorious world spangled with them all over." And in another passage Plato derives from the image of the heavens, as does the psalmist, his conviction of the goodness of God: for if, he says, "we say that the whole path and movement of heaven, and of all that is therein, is by nature akin to the movement and revolution and calculation of mind, and proceeds by kindred laws, then, as is plain, we must say that the best soul takes care of the world and guides it along the good path." Perhaps the sublimest expression of this thought in Greek literature is Aristotle's characterization of Xenophanes: "He cast his eyes upon the expanse of Heaven, and saw that it was one, and that one God."

Celestial order

Xenophanes

Thus the heavens were at once the embodiment of reason and divinity, the symbol of divine rulership and the exemplar of divine perfection. But it was the reverse of obvious that either the mathematical regularity of the heavenly reason or the perfection of heavenly form extend to the world beneath the moon. What seems to have been really the first suggestion that such is the case was the Pythagorean discovery that musical intervals vary with the length of the sound-producing strings according to certain simple and regular numerical ratios. This discovery burst upon men's minds as a sudden revelation of order where order had hitherto never been suspected, and in their first delirious application of it the Pythagoreans seemed to see numbers everywhere, in the world of change below as in the world of constancy above, in the conduct

Musical intervals

of men as in the conduct of gods and stars, and so they proclaimed the Whole to be a One, whose emanating numbers gave coherence and system to all things, and they named this systemic All a Cosmos.

Symbolic universe

There remained one further step. Xenophanes had seen God in the heavens; Pythagoras had lifted Earth up into the Cosmos; but neither had as yet perceived that the world of sense and of physical numbers is only a symbol and an image of the true realm of law, that the cosmic citadel must be sought inwardly in thought and not outwardly in fact. This had been darkly intimated by the dark Heraclitus.

Heraclitus

"Better is the hidden harmony than the manifest," he had said; and again, "In one thing is wisdom, to know the reason by which all through all is guided." But it was Socrates who first clearly and explicitly emphasized the inner nature of the cosmic principle. "Socrates was the first," says Cicero, "to call philosophy down from the sky, and to settle it in the city and even introduce it within the house, and compel it to inquire concerning life and death and things good and ill." Probably, in saying this, Cicero, like Xenophon, merely saw Socrates turning from astronomy as from a vain speculation. The truth of Socrates' mission is perhaps better indicated by Aristotle's statement that it was

Metaphysics, 1078b

Socrates who invented definition. We know what he strove to define—courage and temperance and justice and wisdom, the principles of conduct and the laws of an orderly life. Socrates was seeking cosmos, reason, not in the physical image, but in the spiritual reality. That Socrates was genuinely interested in physical science there is every reason

to believe, but his final attitude is best expressed in the words which Plato puts into his mouth, "Those who elevate astronomy into philosophy appear to me to make us look downward and not upward."

Plato's teachers

The predecessors of Plato had modelled two great conceptions. The physical and mathematical thinkers had evolved the grandiose notion of a Cosmos, an Order, written upon the face of Chaos. Heraclitus and, far more distinctly, Socrates had proclaimed this order of nature to be only outward image and reflection of the inner order of reason. Pythagoras and Heraclitus and Socrates, more than all others, were the teachers of Plato, and it was from the inspirations of their insights that he drew his own magnificent vision of the world.

II

Unreality of sense

The vivid impression one derives from a reading of Plato is of the intensity of his conviction of the unreality of sensible things. The world of sense, of sight and hearing and taste and touch, in which most men chiefly dwell is for him a shadow world. At its best it is but a symbol obscurely imitating the character of the reality which it veils; in its normal function it is a delusional mirage; and at its worst, when it conveys the deception of knowledge, it is the fount of corruption and the seed of damnation. The Greek argument against our commonsense conviction that what we see and touch is real is about as follows: All objects of sense suffer perpetual change; they never *are* this or that, but are always in a process of becoming or of ceasing to be this or that; hence, we cannot justly describe them as being anything, or indeed as having any true exist-

ence of any sort. Heraclitus remarked that one cannot bathe in the same river twice, and Cratylus, the sceptic, after remarking that we cannot in fact bathe in the same river even once, finally, as Aristotle tells us, ceased speech altogether on the ground that it was impossible to say anything that is true; to inquisitors he would reply merely by a wagging of the finger, his mutely eloquent asseveration of his master's dogma that "All things flow." Plato accepted this doctrine, as he also accepted Socrates's conception that ignorance is essential vice, and combining the two, to the sceptical he added a moral condemnation of the world of sense; not only does it not give us truth, but because, as he says, "ignorance is the aberration of a mind bent on truth," through the intensity of its illusions it betrays the soul's integrity.

Scepticism

The Cratylean denial of the possibility of discourse is thus, for Plato, the proclamation of moral ruin, and at such his sanity revolts. Nor is the way of salvation hard to find. If sense be false, ideas may yet be true, and in its own proper world discourse may be dealing with reality. "Knowledge"—these are Plato's words—"does not consist in impressions of sense, but in reasoning about them; in that only, and not in the mere impression, truth and being can be obtained." And again: "Things of which there is no rational account are not knowable; . . . things which have a reason or explanation are knowable." Plato's "world of Ideas," as it is called, is in fact but the assertion that our speech is significant, and that this significance, not the courses of sense, is what we mean by reality. "The word expresses more than the fact," and "in

Knowledge through reason

the nature of things the actual must always fall short of the truth."

Plato's idealism

Plato's idealism is thus simply a sane and unconquerable conviction that there is a realm of truth, and his whole philosophy is an effort to find out this truth. In the *Phædrus* he speaks of truth as "the pilot of the soul"; in the *Philebus* he asserts that the soul has "a power or faculty of loving truth and of doing all things for the sake of it"; and in the *Phædo* he makes Socrates, about to take the hemlock, preface his great argument for the soul's immortality with a wise caution against the bias of desire, "I would ask you to be thinking of the truth and not of Socrates."

Truth

Yet Plato has no illusory notion that truth is of easy access. Immersed as we are in a sea of distorting sensation, our knowledge at its best is only a faith. "For there is no light of justice or temperance or any of the higher ideas which are precious to souls in the earthly copies of them: they are seen through a glass darkly." In the famous image of the den, wherein mankind are the chained prisoners, with their eyes fixed upon the shadows of reality, Plato reminds us that even were our eyes opened to the upper world the light of reality would sear our vision. All that we can hope for is such intimations of the truth as we can gather from the allegory of nature.

Metaphor of vision

And with a curious astuteness he emphasizes the affinity of vision—"the clearest aperture of sense"—to the inner perception of truth. "Sight in my opinion," says Timæus, "is the source of the greatest benefit to us, for had we never seen the stars and the sun and the heavens, none of the words which

we have spoken about the universe would ever have been uttered. But now the sight of day and night, and the months and the revolutions of the years, have created number, and have given us a conception of time, and the power of inquiring about the nature of the universe; and from this source we have derived philosophy, than which no greater good ever was or will be given by the gods to mortal man. . . . . God invented and gave us sight to the end that we might behold the courses of intelligence in the heavens, and apply them to the courses of our own intelligence which are akin to them, the unperturbed to the perturbed; and that we, learning them and partaking of the natural truth of reason, might imitate the absolutely unerring courses of God and regulate our own vagaries."

Timæus, 47

History of science

In this remarkable passage Plato compresses not only the actual history of science, but its psychological foundations and its metaphysical ends, with a precision truly astonishing. I cannot dwell upon the multitude of analogies that it suggests, but the fundamentals are obvious; for the sense of sight is in fact the pattern of intelligence; perception of the heavens has given us our measures of time, and has created number and the science of the calendar which is the parent of all the sciences and of philosophy as well; and again the constancies of the celestial bodies have ever seemed to men, as Plato says, the regulation and the healing of their own errant ways. The whole life of reason is summarized and prophesied in this natural allegory.

And yet, let us repeat, it remains for Plato throughout an allegory. All science is an allegory and an art. What men call nature, the experiences

that in human life stand over against our essential humanity, is after all unreal. It may image reality because it is the product of creative reason, but beyond this power of imaging its only being is scenic and mirage-like.

Allegory of the heavens—*Republic*, 529

"The starry heaven which we behold is wrought upon a visible ground, and therefore, although the fairest and most perfect of visible things must necessarily be deemed inferior far to the true motions of absolute swiftness and absolute slowness, which are relative to each other, and carry with them that which is contained in them, in the true number and in every figure. Now, these are to be apprehended by reason and intelligence, but not by sight. . . . . The spangled heavens should be used as a pattern and with a view to that higher knowledge; their beauty is like the beauty of figures or pictures excellently wrought by the hand of Dædalus, or some other great artist, which we may chance to behold; any geometrician who saw them would appreciate the exquisiteness of their workmanship, but he would never dream of thinking that in them he could find the true equal or the true double, or the truth of any other proportion. . . . And will not the true astronomer have the same feeling when he looks at the movements of the stars? Will he not think that heaven and the things in heaven are framed by the Creator of them in the most perfect manner? But he will never imagine that the proportions of night and day, or of both to the month, or of the month to the year, or of the stars to these and to one another, and any other things that are material and visible can also be eternal and subject to no deviation—that would be absurd."

Duhem on astronomy and physics

Where the ancients said "astronomy" we say "physics," remarks a savant of our own day; and is it not obvious that Plato's words hold with perfect truth of our own science? For we, like Plato, do not look to the visible and sensible world for our realities, but to an ideal world which is only faintly intimated by the riddle of the senses. Whether it be as in our mechanical sciences a world of atoms and molecules or of ether vortices or of electrons and ions, or as in our biological sciences a world of genera and species, in every case we hypothecate a realm of forms, of ideas, as the essential reality of all natural phenomena. We vary no whit from Plato in all this; and indeed, little as they may suspect it, all our scientists are good Platonians.

Valuation of science

But where we do vary from Plato is in the kind of value which we set upon our ideas. For we regard our scientific knowledge as ultimate and as a kind of divine possession in itself, whereas Plato held it to be only a means whereby men can dimly approach the being of divinity. In his own phrase we are "thrice removed from the king and the truth": behind the world of sense is the world of mathematical forms which are in turn but the reflection of the divine intelligence. Sense is the allegory of science, but science itself is only our human parable of divinity—a myth whose meaning is the mind of God. Science is thus a purely human instrument, and truth, our human, intellectual truth, is but the device whereby we adumbrate the nature of being. "The Deity," says Plutarch in one of his expositions of Plato, "stands in no need of science, as an instrument to withdraw his intellect

from things engendered and to turn it to the realities; for these are all in him, and with him, and about him." It is only the weakness of human insight that makes the world-myth a significant myth.

III

Plato's myths

Plato, his critics are accustomed to say, resorts to allegory, to what he himself calls myth, when he encounters problems with which rational analysis alone is unable to cope. The lordly tales which adorn his dialogues these critics view as imaginative ornaments which Plato himself takes only half seriously. This I believe to be a misunderstanding. It is characteristic of these myths that they are introduced not when Plato is analyzing the nature of being, but when he has passed to a discussion of becoming, that is, when cosmic history rather than metaphysical organization is his theme. Now it is this province of becoming, which we should call the field of empirical science, which is, in Plato's view, itself an allegorical reality. And in resorting to allegory for its description he is but emphasizing the duplex nature of the fact. There is no field of discourse where positive statement is so easy and so dangerous as in the field of science (in our modern sense), and in discussing the problems of change Plato employs myths primarily in order that he may avoid dogmatism. Empirical science is for him a work of human art, just as the empirical universe is God's work of art; and he would not have us forget, what we are so prone to forget, that our constructions of cosmic realities give us at best but a verisimilitude, or as he would say, an "imitation" of the truth. In speaking of the empiric world, he

God's art

repeats again and again, we can use but the "language of probability," and the language of probability is myth.

Language of probability

When therefore Plato, in the language of probability or of myth, sketches for us the cosmic drama which is the history of the world, it is with no Laplacean confidence in the invulnerability of his representation. Rather he is aware that at the core it cannot be the essential truth of the cosmos: science is given us in order that we may "imitate," as he says, "the absolutely unerring courses of God and regulate our own vagaries": it is not and it cannot give dogmatic knowledge. "Law and order," to quote once more, "deliver the soul"; and there is a trenchant difference between this and our modern conception that the soul is but an automatic reflection of external laws and orders.

The motive which animates Plato's cosmological speculations is thus clearly a humanistic motive. He is concerned for truth, but only for such truth as bears directly upon men's conduct, and this he does not expect to find in the sensible world. For him, as for Dante, the world in time and space is but the vesture of man's life, whose essence and reality is to be sought in that divine nature of which apparent nature is the image. Truth, then, must be appraised, and the appraiser is the Good and the Perfect,—for "nothing imperfect is the measure of anything."

Truth's appraisal

The conception of a cosmic drama—a world-play having, as Aristotle would say, a beginning, a middle and an end, a complication and a solution,—is not new with Plato. It appears in the theogonic epics and in the notions of the physical philosophers of

the earlier period. But it is with Plato that the proper motive of the plot appears; and this is the striving for the good. With Plato's predecessors the moral problem had been (as it is to our scientists) adventitious; with Plato it is central, and we can understand his science of first and last things only when we see in it, as he saw in nature, a cosmic staging of the search for salvation.

Cosmic drama

Genesis and eschatology represent respectively the complication and solution of the plot. Genesis, the tale of origins, is treated most completely in the *Timæus;* cosmic justice and its judgments is the theme of the speculative cosmology of Socrates in the *Phædo* and of the vision of Er in the *Republic.* In these and in allied passages Plato draws for us his world emblem.

Plato begins his genesis, in the *Timæus,* with an assertion of dualism. "First," says Timæus, "we must make a distinction and ask, What is that which always is and has no becoming; and what is that which is always becoming and never is? That which is apprehended by intelligence and reason is always in the same state; but that which is conceived by opinion with the help of sensation and without reason, is always in a process of becoming and perishing and never really is." In its inception this dualism is a logical one, hypostatized into the familiar Platonic antithesis of the World of Sense and the World of Ideas. But very speedily we perceive that the moral antithesis of good and evil is in it also. The kernel of Plato's thought is the old philosophical dualism of Nous and Chaos, and even the older mythic dualism of Heaven and Earth; and, as does the earlier thought, he identifies

Logical dualism also moral

Mind and Light with Goodness, and Disorder and Darkness with Evil.

Motive of creation—*Timæus*, 30

"God desired that all things should be good and nothing bad, so far as this was attainable. Wherefore also finding the whole visible sphere not at rest, but moving in an irregular and disorderly fashion, out of disorder he brought order, considering that this was in every way better than the other. Now the deeds of the best could never be or have been other than the fairest; and the creator, reflecting on the things which are by nature visible, found that no unintelligent creature taken as a whole was fairer than the intelligent taken as a whole; and that intelligence could not be present in anything which was devoid of soul. For which reason, when he was framing the universe, he put intelligence in soul, and soul in body, that he might be the creator of a work which was by nature fairest and best. Wherefore, using the language of probability, we may say that the world became a living creature truly endowed with soul and intelligence by the providence of God."

In these words of Timæus, Plato outlines his conception of creation. God, perceiving the disorder of Chaos, designs to redeem it by imparting to it the image of mind, of Cosmos, order. He creates it, therefore, in the likeness of a perfect animal (παντελὲς ζῷον), "the very image of that whole of which all other animals both individually and in their tribes are portions." First he created its soul, the *anima mundi*, "to be the ruler and mistress, of whom the body was to be the subject," organized from the categories of thought, from identity and difference and essence, in harmony of number.

Anima mundi

Afterwards he gave it body, interfusing with the visible body the rational soul, so that the whole universe of being became one animal endowed with soul (ζῷον ἔμψυχον).

The cosmic animal—*Timæus*, 33

"And he gave to the world the figure which was suitable and also natural. Now to the animal which was to comprehend all animals, that figure was suitable which comprehends within itself all other figures. Wherefore he made the world in the form of a globe, round as from a lathe, having its extremes in every direction equidistant from the center, the most perfect and the most like itself of all figures; for he considered that the like is infinitely fairer than the unlike. This he finished off, making the surface smooth all round for many reasons; in the first place because the living being had no need of eyes when there was nothing remaining outside of him to be seen; nor of ears when there was nothing to be heard; and there was no surrounding atmosphere to be breathed; nor would there have been any use of organs by the help of which he might receive his food or get rid of what he had already digested, since there was nothing that went from him or came into him: for there was nothing beside him. . . . And, as he had no need to take anything or defend himself against any one, the Creator did not think it necessary to bestow upon him hands: nor had he any need of feet nor of the whole apparatus of walking; but the movement suited to his spherical form was assigned to him, ... and he made the universe a circle moving within a circle, one and solitary, yet by reason of its excellence able to converse with itself, and needing no other friendship or acquaintance. Hav-

ing these purposes in view he created the world a blessed god."

Time the image of eternity—*Timæus, 37*

"When the father and creator saw the creature which he had made moving and living, the created image of the eternal gods, he rejoiced, and in his joy determined to make the copy still more like the original; and as this was eternal, he sought to make the universe eternal, so far as might be. Now the nature of the ideal being was everlasting, but to bestow this attribute in its fullness upon a creature was impossible. Wherefore he resolved to have a moving image of eternity, and when he set in order the heaven, he made this image eternal but moving according to number, while eternity itself rests in unity; and this image we call time." Time came into being with the heavens which measure it, and will be dissolved with them, says Plato; but space is of another origin. For besides the reason which gives cosmic form there is another cause of being, a principle of limitation which Plato calls necessity.

Space and necessity—*Timæus,* 50

We must conceive, he says, of three natures; first, that which is in process of generation, and this would be the world of nature as we experience it; second, that in which the generation takes place, and this is the recipient or matrix of nature; and third, that of which the generated world is an image, and this is the cosmic reason or form. "We may liken the receiving principle to a mother, and the source or spring to a father, and the intermediate nature to a child," he says, and we think immediately of the mythopoetic union of Earth and Heaven and of the Life of Nature which is its offspring. But for Plato this is a mere trope; he does not rest without being scientifically explicit. There are three

kinds of being: that which is uncreated and indestructible, changeless, eternal, imperceptible to any sense, open only to the contemplation of the intelligence, and this is the principle of the Father, the ideal or formal essence of the world; again, that which is sensible and created and always in motion, the Child, the world of change and life; and finally, there is a third nature, the Mother, which, like the Father, is eternal and admits not of destruction, which provides a home for all created things, and is apprehended "without the help of sense, by a kind of spurious reason, and is indeed hardly real." This nature is space, and we "beholding as in a dream, say of all existence that it must of necessity be in some place and occupy a space, but that what is neither in heaven nor in earth has no existence."

Father, Mother, Child

This mothering space which is hardly real, yet is the cause of the determinism of nature, Plato identifies as the material element of being. As pure matter it is purely indeterminate, but it is receptive of all determinations. The four elements, earth, air, fire and water, are formed from it, for "the mother substance becomes earth and air, in so far as she receives the impressions of them." Plato's conception of the formation of these elements from the original substance was as purely mathematical as are our modern physical notions. "God fashioned them by form and number," he says; and the forms which he assigned were the forms of the regular solids. Thus the form of the fiery element is the pyramid, of air the octahedron, of water the icosahedron, of earth the cube. The fifth solid, the dodecahedron, is the form of the universe as a whole, or perhaps one might say the scaffold upon which the

Matter

Elements

spherical universe is constructed. Further, these elements are themselves compounded of simpler mathematical forms, the pyramid, octahedron and icosahedron of equilateral, the cube of isosceles triangles; so that if we regard the elements as molecules, we may view the triangles as atoms of the material substrate.

God the Geometer—Plutarch, *Synposiacs*, VIII. ii.

Doubtless it was this geometrical account of matter which gave rise to the saying ascribed to Plato that "God always geometrizes,"—for God, says Plutarch in his commentary on the saying, made the world in no other way than by setting terms to infinite and chaotic matter. But it is not with the mathematical aspect of Plato's theory that we are here most concerned, but with its moral bearings. For it is in matter that Plato finds the root of evil, and, if we may so put it, the villainy of the world. In framing the inhabitants of the world, according to the account of Timæus, the Creator made first the race of gods, perfect and immortal; but of the race of men he made only the souls, their bodies were handed over to the created gods to be composed of perishable matter. "The part of them worthy of the name immortal, which is called divine and is the guiding principle of those who are willing to follow justice and you (the gods)—of that divine part I will myself," saith the Creator, "sow the seed, and having made a beginning, I will hand the work over to you. And do ye then interweave the mortal with the immortal, and make and beget living creatures, and give them food, and make them to grow, and receive them again in death."

Evil and death

And having made souls equal in number to the

stars, and having assigned each soul to a star, and there placed them as in a chariot, God "showed them the nature of the universe, and declared to them the laws of destiny, according to which their first birth would be one and the same for all,—no one should suffer a disadvantage at his hands,"—and he showed them how "he who lived well during his appointed time was to return and dwell in his native star, and there would have a blessed and congenial existence; but if he failed in attaining this," he would be reborn into some brute who resembled him in evil nature, nor would his toils and transformations cease until the principle of reason had enabled him to overcome "the turbulent and irrational mob of later accretions, made up of fire and air and water and earth" and return to his first and purer state. And "having given all these laws to his creatures, that he might be guiltless of future evil in any of them, the Creator sowed some of them in the earth, and some in the moon, and some in the other instruments of time; and when he had sown them he committed to the younger gods the fashioning of their mortal bodies, and desired them to furnish what was still lacking to the human soul, and to rule over them, and to pilot the mortal animal in the best and wisest manner which they could, and avert from him all but self-inflicted evils."

To each soul a star

In these passages we see the *rationale* of the Platonic doctrines of anamnesis and metempsychosis, or recollection and transmigration. The great image in the *Phædrus* of the soul in its chariot driving the unruly and the ruly steed, and the descriptions of a future-world judgment in the *Phædo*

Anamnesis and metempsychosis

and *Republic,* in which these doctrines are presented, appear as necessary scenes in the cosmic drama. The motive of that drama is the conflict of form and matter, Nous and Chaos, which on its theological side is the conflict of God and Necessity as the two principles of being, and in its moral aspect is the strife of Good and Evil. In each of these senses Plato is a dualist; and if he describes chaos and matter and evil in negative terms, this is not because he views them as non-existent (as our modern idealists seem to do), but because he regards them as impermanent, and hence as unreal; for Plato defines the real as the permanent, never, however, meaning thereby to deny genuineness of our experience of change and hence of imperfection and evil.

Dualistic strife

Nevertheless, Good and Evil, God and the Devil, are not in Plato's conception co-ordinate powers. Their difference is a difference of dramatic position. In the world-conflict we, as human beings, are all enlisted on the side of the good, and if we are traitorous to it this is because of the deceit of the enemy. "For as we acknowledge the world to be full of many goods and also of evils, and of more evils than goods, there is, as we affirm, an immortal conflict going on among us, which requires marvelous watchfulness, and in that conflict the gods and demigods are our allies and we are their property." No Persian has ever stated this fundamental dualism more emphatically nor adhered to it more uncompromisingly. From it Plato deduces the ascetic rule of life which recurs in his writings so repeatedly. "Evils," says Socrates in the *Theætetus,* "can never pass away; for there must always re-

Laws, 906

Evil eternal

main something which is antagonistic to good. Having no place among the gods in heaven, of necessity they hover around the mortal nature and this earthly sphere. Wherefore we ought to fly away from earth to heaven as quickly as we can." And from it, too, comes Plato's clear-eyed perception that the idea of good holds the hegemony over all our interests, scientific and æsthetic as well as moral. It is the good—as our pragmatists say—which makes truth true and is indeed the measure of reality. For "that which imparts truth to the known and the power of knowing to the knower is what I would have you term the idea of good, and this you will deem to be the cause of science, and of truth in so far as the latter becomes the subject of knowledge; beautiful, too, as are both truth and knowledge, you will be right in esteeming this other nature as more beautiful than either; and as light and sight may be truly said to be like the sun and yet not to be the sun, so in this other sphere, science and truth may be deemed to be like the good, but not the good; the good has a place of honor yet higher."

Hegemony of the Good

IV

Let me briefly recapitulate Plato's view. In the beginning were God and Chaos. And God strove to impress the spirit of order, which is his own divine spirit, upon the face of the Void. And in his own image he created a soul of the World, and the name of this soul is Cosmos, Order. And to this divine soul he united a body, hewn from Chaos, and this soul in this body forms the visible Heaven and all that is therein. And he created

The Platonic Genesis

Strife the Father of All

inhabitants for the world which he had made, the race of gods and of demigods and the race of mortal men; and these were to be his allies and his helpmates in the redemption of Chaos. For Chaos is ruled by blind Necessity, and the horror of its blindness enters into all being in which it has a share; so that not men nor demigods nor gods are free from the peril of Darkness, which is the peril of their material and temporal being. Wherefore it behooves them, men and gods, to strive nobly after the Good, holding fast to the image of divinity which is in them. And to this strife there is and there can be no end. For Chaos is co-equal with God, infinite in change as God is infinite in might; and the conflict of the two is the eternal struggle for the world's salvation which is the world's life.

Vitality of Platonism

In conclusion, I would say a word in regard to the wonderful vitality of Plato's thought; for to no other philosopher has it been given to lay such lasting hold at once upon men's reason and upon their affectionate imagination. I think the clue to this will appear if we compare his attitude with that of his great pupil and competitor toward the man from whom both derive their inspiration. For Aristotle, the arch-intellectualist, saw in Socrates but the inventor of definition—"two things may be fairly ascribed to Socrates, inductive arguments and universal definition"—and he made definition the very core of his own metaphysics. But for Plato Socrates is first and last that "mid-wife of souls" which he would have himself to be. Plato, in other words, had caught what Aristotle missed, the central spirituality of Socrates' teaching.

Socrates

Plato is a great dialectician and a master of the

things of the intellect, but he knew as Socrates had taught, that reason alone cannot bring us to the truth, and that science is no capable vessel of reality. When "all philosophers proclaim, as with one voice, that mind is the king of heaven and earth—in reality they are but magnifying themselves," he says; for he knows well that beyond the symbols of sense, which are the symbols of our reason, there is a more splendid reality. We can see this other-world truth but as in a glass darkly; we can speak of it only in myth and allegory; we can hope for its realization never save in those aeon-parted moments of the cosmic cycles when the soul, after its hour of agony, has brought its steeds to that outer revolving heaven whence the things that are beyond stand revealed. And "of that heaven which is above the heavens, what earthly poet ever did or ever will sing worthily? . . . . There abides the very being with which true knowledge is concerned; the colorless, formless, intangible essence, visible only to mind, who is the pilot of the soul. The divine intelligence, being nurtured upon mind and pure knowledge, and the intelligence of every soul which is capable of receiving the food proper to it, rejoices at beholding reality, and once more gazing upon truth, is replenished and made glad, until the revolution of the worlds brings her round again to the same place."

Mind the king

Phædrus, 247

Such is the beatific vision, and "how can he who has magnificence of mind and is the spectator of all time and all existence think much of human life?" Surely he will value it only for this spiritual prospect which it promises; "he will look at the city which is within him" whereof the pattern is the heavenly

Beatific vision

city; and "he will live after the manner of that city, having nothing to do with any other."

Is it not because of this faith in the spiritual reality of the world-life, which is a faith in the spiritual power of mankind, that Plato has brought conviction to the minds of his fellows, generation after generation, the edifice of his thought standing secure amid the rise and decay of competing systems? And is there other measure of truth than this?

Spiritual realities

XI. MUSIC AND POETRY

I

THE art of music, while doubtless the most ancient of all the arts, has, of them all, the briefest historic span. The architecture, sculpture, and painting, of the remotest Egyptian antiquity are continuous with the architecture, sculpture, and painting of today: amid all the diversities of schools and styles, there is a central unity of development. The literatures of the Hebrews, Greeks, and Latins are in an even more intimate sense but the earlier chapters in the history of Western Letters, as a whole. But music is connected with antiquity by the most tenuous threads. We know something of the externals of ancient music, the use of sistrum and trumpet and sounding strings by the men of Egypt,—that the Jews lamented with harps beside the waters of Babylon,—that the Greeks created a science from their music of lyre and flute and voice, and no doubt possessed an art worthy of that science. But of ancient music itself our knowledge is little more than guesswork. Certainly, we can point to no such continuity in the history of our music and ancient music as is patent even to the casual student of literature or the fine arts.

The art of music

The continuous history of the art of music dates from the Middle Ages. The tenth, eleventh, twelfth, and thirteenth centuries were the centuries which saw the transformation of the old inflectional tongues into the analytic languages of modern

Its history

Europe, which saw the beginnings of modern literatures, and which witnessed the perfection of the great and new art of Gothic architecture. These were centuries—culminating in the thirteenth, one of the supreme periods of human genius—during which the life of the spirit, awakening from the long torpor of the ages we call "the Dark," was finding its own in new crafts and new sciences, in a new poetry, and a new painting, and a new sculpture; and it was these fecund centuries which beheld the birth of our modern art of music.

Song and ballad

I am not now speaking of the elemental forms of music. The song that is in all men's hearts when

"Lenten is come with love,"

and birds and blossoms are awake after winter snows,—the ballad that celebrates the deeds of stout Robin Hood,—these are a part of the ageless heritage of the human soul. And if they inspired a wonderful freshness of minstrelsy in the *chansons* of the troubadours of Provence and Italy, in the *contes* and *romaunts* of the jongleurs of Norman France and Plantagenet England, in the love-songs of the German minnesingers,—all this was but a part and portion of the splendid vitality of a great age.

Church music

But the art of music of which I do speak is that which arose in the great cathedral centers—the music of the church choir, which was to pass from the strong and simple *canto fermo* of the Gregorian chant to the marvelous polyphony of Palæstrina and Bach. Probably the rudiments of this music were all that the Middle Ages retained from the musical art of classical times,—the notes of the Greek

modes, inverted and ascending, the wholly vocal melody, from which, long since, the rhythmic reminiscence of the dance had been purified away, so that the music was as free from fleshly feeling as Botticelli's bodiless cherubs. And it was just *this abstractness of the discarnate voice*—issuing from the choir-loft not as the breath of pulsating human bodies, but like the song of invisible angels—that made of this music of the Church so spiritual a music, and at the same time made pure music possible as an architectonic art.

Music discarnate

You have heard, often enough, that music is subjective, ideal, a language of the emotions and of the spirit. Have you ever asked *why* it is so? And is not the answer, in part at least, just here: that music, like all sound, seems to be independent of—a spirit *freed from*—the body or instrument whence it issues? It is its incorporeality, its freedom from material embodiments that makes music ideal and spiritual; and the polyphonic music of the Church, which of all music most perfectly attains this incorporeal character, is of all music the most purely and wonderfully a speech of angels.

Paradiso, XXVIII

"I heard *Hosannah!* sung from choir to choir,
To that fixed Point which holds them, to that Height
They have known always and will always know . . .
Unceasingly *Hosannah!* is their song,
Which in three melodies in orders three
Reflects the spirit of their joy triune."

Such is Dante's description of the polyphony of Paradise—and surely none has ever given a more beautiful image of the spiritual choirs than his, in which he likens them to singing stars circling forever above the Celestial Rose.

Effect of Latin

May it not be that this music of the Church gained something of its power, too, from the fact that it was wedded to a language which had become remote from the modes of speech in which men expressed their bodily needs and mundane desires? Mediæval Latin was the language of learned and serious thought, above all of religious thought. Its greatest literary productions were the noble hymns—the noblest, I can but think, of all Christian hymns—which were sung by the cathedral choirs. The "Sequences" of Abelard and of Adam of St. Victor in their changing metres and constant variety of stanza reflect the intricacy of the polyphonic music or of the interwoven architectural traceries of the cathedrals in which they were sung. I cannot here enter into this subject, yet neither can I, before leaving it, forbear quoting a few verses from that grandest and most Christian hymn of them all, the *Dies Iræ* of Thomas of Celano:

Most Christian of hymns

"Dies iræ, dies illa
Solvet sæclum in favilla,
Teste David cum Sybilla . . ."

"Day of Wrath, oh, dread day coming,
When the years shall fall in ashes,
As saith David and the Sibyl . . ."

And then the wonderful organ-tones of that stanza:

"Tuba mirum spargens sonum
Per sepulchra regionum,
Coget omnes ante thronum."

"Trump of doom its thunder rolling
Mid the tombs of every region
Summons all before the throne . . ."

While the passionate yearning that seems the very essence of the mystical spirit in Mediæval Chris-

tianity surely finds its supreme eloquence in the tender harmonies of these stanzas:

"Recordare, Jesu pie,
Quod sum causa tuæ viæ;
Ne me perdas illa die!

"Quærens me sedisti lassus,
Redemisti crucem passus:
Tantus labor non sit casus!"

"O remember, Jesu, pray thee,
That for me thy Toil was taken,—
Lose me not on that dread Day!

"Seeking *me* thou'dst linger weary,
To redeem, the Cross didst suffer:
Ne'er thine anguish shall be vain!"

Can we find any broader analogy between Mediæval music and Mediæval poetry? It seems to me that we can, and without undue fancy.

Analogy of architecture

"Architecture is frozen music," is the saying of Friedrich Schlegel. And if this saying is anywhere significant surely it is so in relation to polyphonic music and Gothic architecture. In each there is the progressive playing of part against part, the building up of member against member, each structure completed only to point to a still incomplete superstructure, joining in the endless aspirational upward sweep of the whole. Arch rests upon arch, flying buttress upon buttress, pinnacle rises above pinnacle,—everywhere there is a balance not quite attained, a symmetry not quite perfected,—and by and by we realize that no Gothic church can ever be *completed:* its beauty is its eternal promise, its endless upward flight. Is not this the very image of contrapuntal music, and of its supreme expression in the fugue?

And if we turn to Mediæval literature the thing

Tales and fables

that first strikes us is the prevalence of *double meanings*. The moral tales, the fables of talking beasts, the mystic quests of the Holy Grail, the dramatized Trinities and Passions and Redemptions, everywhere we find *allegory*, the play of idea against idea, of meaning within meaning, intricacy patterned within intricacy.

Polyphonic literature

Is not this literature, too, Gothic and polyphonic? And need I do more, to accent the analogy, than recall to your minds the greatest of all Mediæval poems? For you will remember Dante's letter to Can Grande in which he tells of the four-fold meaning of the passage of Israel out of Egypt: its *literal* meaning, the exodus of the Children of Israel in the time of Moses; its *allegorical* meaning, our redemption through Christ; its *moral* meaning, the conversion of the soul from the wretchedness of sin to the state of grace; and its *anagogical* meaning, typifying the passage of the soul from its servitude to fleshly corruption into the freedom of eternal glory,—and you will remember, too, that he builds his own stupendous *Divine Comedy* upon a similar interplay of meanings:

The Divine Comedy

> *"Literally,"* he says, "the subject of this whole work is the state of the soul after death, taken simply; for from this and about this the whole theme turns. But *allegorically* the subject is Man, through freedom of choice, by merit or demerit made subject to the rewards or punishments of Divine Justice."

In the days of its senescence polyphonic music resolved into a mere monkish puzzle, as many as twenty or thirty themes being wrought into unperformable manuscript fugues. But even this decay is not without its literary parallels. At least, the dry schematisms of scholastic reasoners suggest the

analogy. I will only cite for you the erudite Burton's characterization of that . . .

". . . most copious confuter of atheists . . . . Marinus Mersennus in his Commentaries on Genesis. . . . He sets down at large the causes of this brutish passion (seventeen in number, I take it), answers all their arguments and sophisms, which he reduceth to twenty-six heads, proving withal his own assertion: 'There is a God, such a God, the true and sole God,' by thirty-five reasons. His Colophon is how to resist and suppress atheism and to that purpose he adds four especial means or ways, which whoso will may profitably peruse."

Anatomy of Melancholy III. iv. ii. i

II

The Renaissance is the period of revived humanism. Men turned from the ascetic denial of the monastery or the lonely and passionate longing of the anchorite's cell to view with freshened and curious eyes the changing light and color and movement and sound of the Pageant of Life. Palace and Court replace Cathedral and Cloister as the center of intellectual action. We think no longer of grey-stoled monks, thin-visaged and sedentary, but of swashbucklers and tramp scholars and hard soldiers of fortune, of devil-may-care Cellinis, roistering Marlowes, chivalrous Sidneys, damsels gay with bright brocades, and young gallants with a lady's favor at the cap, a lute swung from the shoulder, and a sharp blade lithe in its sheath. These were the singing years, when life was as full and exuberant as a song of passion, and as brief . . . . when men sought eagerly quick loves and quick deaths.

The Renaissance

We know what the Renaissance meant in literature: such a burst of bloom that its fragrance is still, like a wine in the blood, intoxicating the imag-

Renaissance literature

ination. The sonnets of laureled Petrarch, the mad tales of Boccaccio, the jests and grandiosities of Ronsard, the rogueries and sweetnesses of Villon, and in our own literature all that is represented by the names of Sidney and Spenser and Marlowe and Webster and Jonson and Shakespeare and lonely Milton,—these are the gift and the life of the Renaissance in letters.

Fine Arts

The changed spirit is reflected, too, in the painter's and sculptor's arts. No longer do we meet saints whose bodies are but draped pillars or stiffly recumbent brasses of the dead, no longer starkly upright Madonnas and wan and angular Crucifixions; but in their place there are the muscled and striving bodies of heroes or the mutely drooping limbs of sufferers, there are the limpid fulness and delicate curves of the *tondi* of Botticelli, the seraphic fleetness and freedom of form and drapery drawn by the hand of a Raphael, the unappeasable strength and endeavor of Michelangelo's demigods. Everywhere *motion,* and a kind of soundless jubilation of those hosts released at last from their long servitude to the genius of meditative repose.

Music

Such is the change of spirit which the Renaissance brings to letters and the plastic arts: is a similar change to be found in the realm of music? Need I more than ask the question? Instruments were multiplied and perfected, and the foundations of the orchestra laid. The full twelve notes of the chromatic scale were determined, and in place of the angular coincidences of the old contrapuntal figures came the soft chords and mellifluous transitions of harmony. With the rising art of the theatric stage—"tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-com-

ical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable or poem unlimited," to quote Polonius' expressive catalogue—came the no less prolific and various art of the operatic stage. The "organ-notes of Miltonic music" are not unworthily reflected in the equally dignified and plastic oratorio. And the life which was moving in such rapid tempo in all men's veins found itself embodied again in the vigorous rhythms from the dances of countryside and court to become the formative soul of the developing sonata and symphony.

The play-spirit of the time—that "jesting spirit, ... now crept into a lute-string, and new-governed by stops," as Shakespeare hath it—appears alike in carol and roundelay, serenade and fantasia, and in the masques and mummeries and games of courtly love wherein sparkled the gaieties of the high-born.

The play spirit

"The fault will be in the music, cousin, if you be not wooed in good time: if the prince be too important, tell him there is measure in everything, and so dance out the answer. For hear me, Hero: wooing, wedding, and repenting, is as a Scotch jig, a measure, and a cinque-pace; the first suit is hot and hasty, like a Scotch jig, and full as fantastical; the wedding, mannerly-modest,—as a measure, full of state and ancientry; and then comes Repentance, and with his bad legs falls into the cinque-pace faster and faster, till he sink into his grave."

Much Ado About Nothing, II. i.

But I would not leave you with this tart scolding of our Shakespeare in your ears. Rather I would have you carry hence the ringing echoes of that melodious lyric for which Henry Purcell has left so beautiful a setting:

Lyric loveliness

"Full fathom five thy father lies;
Of his bones are coral made:
Those are pearls that were his eyes:
Nothing of him that doth fade,
But doth suffer a sea-change
Into something rich and strange.
Sea-nymphs hourly ring his knell:
Hark! now I hear them,—
Ding-dong, bell . . ."

Could this have been written save in an age when men's souls were married to melody and all the world but one great instrument for their thoughts to play upon? . . . Nor must we forget Milton's no less tuneful praise of his brother-poet, as in his poet's dream he hears . . .

". . . sweetest Shakespeare, Fancy's child,
Warble his native wood-notes wild,
And ever, against eating cares,
Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse,
Such as the meeting soul may pierce,
In notes with many a winding bout
Of linkèd sweetness long drawn out
With wanton heed and giddy cunning,
The melting voice through mazes running,
Untwisting all the chains that tie
The hidden soul of harmony."

Surely in those days the poet beheld his lovely Muse, not through a glass darkly, but face to face!

III

Neo-Classicism

The age of Louis le Grand saw the adoption of Classicism, as the Renaissance Italians understood it, by the nations of trans-Alpine Europe. Like the personality of the great Louis, this Neo-Classicism was, even in its inception, grandiose rather than noble, with a theatric stress upon the "elevation,"

the façade, rather than a real care for significant structure and inner sanity. It had in it all the perils of the rococo and the baroque into which it was to degenerate even in the lifetime of *le grand monarque.* But again like the personality of the great Louis, it had its own dignity and power—coming, I imagine, from the *state* which made the importance of the *I,* rather than from the stagy little *ego* which had become wholly absorbed by the *state.* It was an age of *externals,* of devotion to dress and manners, to form and formality, in the spiritual world as in the political, to which Louis the Fourteenth introduced the peoples of Europe.

Classic to Baroque

In thinking of this period, our imaginations inevitably fill with the ornate costumes which the beaux and belles of a time when all were beaux and belles loved to invent, and which the painters profusely reproduced, for the painter's art was now become the art of portraiture. We begin with plumed and booted cavaliers, curled love-locks upon their cheeks, armed with long rapier and slender *miséricorde;* we end with stout gentlemen of rubicund countenance, frilled and powdered, bewigged and queued, takers of snuff and frequenters of polite salons:—a speaking image of the decline from Classic to Baroque.

Wit and wisdom

Spiritually the era from the days of Louis to the French Revolution was an era in which wit was more valued than wisdom, in which passion gave place to sentimentality, and in which a gloss of complacency oiled the surface of the turbulent deeps of human nature. It was natural that the great art of the time should be the art of the theatre—at least in a country like France which had had no

Belles-lettres

theatre; and there we find the stately Alexandrines of the French classical drama—the tragedy of Corneille and Racine, the merciless gaiety of Molière. And it was natural that in a country like England, which had had its dramatic flowering, the biting if superficial satire of Pope's polished couplets, the heady liquor of Dean Swift's lampoons, should fulfil the mission of letters. Polish, wit, an immaculate surface, and a mannered easiness which makes even brutality palatable—these were qualities attained by the most devotedly formal of all the centuries.

And what of music during this period? . . .

Yes, it is the Classical Age of music, too,—but in how contradictory a sense!

Music

It is true that the artificiality and formalism of a formal and artificial period was bound to find its reflection in the art of music as in the other arts. We see it in the *da camera* temperament of the art. It is no longer a cathedral art, as in the Middle Ages; it has lost the open-air exuberance of the Renaissance; it is now an art of the *Concertmeister* and *Kapellmeister,* indoor and staid,—a professional performance to be listened to with polite ears and responded to with subdued hand-clappings, rather than a lover's song to be heard with passionate heart from behind the window lattice. And even where it is interbound with the dance, music is still formal and almost officiously polite; we can hardly think of gigue or sarabande, minuet or gavotte, except as the graceful amusement of some courtly company,—all flavor of peasant and barbarian is gone.

Bach to Beethoven

And yet this is the period in which was passed the life of Sebastian Bach and which saw the birth of Ludwig van Beethoven, the period in which were

produced Haydn's oratorios and Mozart's sonatas and operas. It was in the truest and greatest sense the classical age of music.

Absolute music

You will say, and I will agree, that the art of these men, too, was a formal and architectonic art, that their power was intellectual, and that the "absolute" music which they created calls into action the powers of the understanding even more than the powers of the heart. In all this they are at one with their time.

But in another and a deeper sense the great music of the eighteenth century is far greater than the eighteenth century. For I believe it to be nobler and more enduring than any other artistic achievement of the period. In a period of dress and manners, a period when men were intellectually sincere only when their wit was being spent upon the foibles of their fellows, a new and great art was born to vindicate the eternal sincerity of soul which is the one promise of an eventual human redemption. And the grave and paternal figure of John Sebastian Bach stands out as that of the one man of his time to whom the world owes most.

Goethe

Some of you, I suspect, will be holding Goethe's name upon your lips. And it would be foolish to dispute the greatness or the sincerity of Goethe's poetic utterance:

"Uber allen Gipfeln
Ist Ruh',
In allen Wipfeln
Spürest du
Kaum einen Hauch;
Die Vögelein schweigen im Walde,
Warte nur, balde
Ruhest du auch."

Music and poetry

Goethe is a great poet, but Goethe, like Beethoven, is as much of the romantic nineteenth century as of the classic eighteenth; and in any case, great as he is, can we say that Goethe is to poetry what either Bach or Beethoven is to music?

I will not say no; there may be room for two opinions. But I will say that there are no *two* figures in the poetry of this age comparable to the makers of the art of music—Bach and Beethoven.

IV

Nineteenth-century art

Everybody knows that the nineteenth century is called "Romantic"; and everybody knows that the reasons given for this naming are as many as there are critics of nineteenth-century art. What consensus of opinion exists is, in effect, that the nineteenth century is Romantic *because* it represents a breaking-away from the rigid forms and canons of the eighteenth century, *because* it is post-Classic. It is a century of restlessness, inner and outer, of confused and chaotic endeavor; and its moods range from the introspective reclusiveness of "the soul immured in its tower of ivory" to the greasy elbow-rubbing of bawling democrats or the plaintive aloofness of the great Victorian laureate. The virtue of the century was its willingness to dare all things; its weakness and besetting sin was its empty strivings after empty effects, and too often its loud satisfaction in the emptiness attained. No century ever attempted to express so much; no century ever succeeded in expressing so much; yet no century, I think, leaves us less satisfied with its attainment. Did the nineteenth century produce one perfect work? . . . . Indeed, I doubt it. Beautiful works

there are a-many; there are great works and some that deserve the name sublime. But the whole artistic spirit of the century seems starred with an inward defect, and the taint of mortality affects even its greatest productions. When we think of the high sufficiency of the Psalms of David or of the Song of Songs which is Solomon's, when we think of the passionate music of the inimitable Sappho or of the still and white intensity of the *Œdipus* of Sophocles, when we call to mind melodious Vergil or the marvelous *canzoni* of him who wrote,

Mortal quality

"Donne, ch'avete intelletto d'amore,—"

the whole nineteenth century seems somehow lame and halting; and listening to these winged words of the past, we are willing humbly to say with Shelley that our

"Chorus Hymeneal,
Or triumphant chant,
Matched with thine would be all
But an empty vaunt,
A thing wherein we feel there is some hidden want."

I can think of no better image of the "Progress of the Nineteenth Century" than to call before your imagination a series of the great paintings which mark the stages of this most coloristic of periods. We will begin with David's *Madame Récamier*— perhaps the supreme achievement of French Academism,—with its high and fine care for design, beauty of line and grace of composition, and its cool indifference to luxury of tone. From the period that follows the era of Napoleon, we will remember such various endeavors as the haunting and horrid

Academism

Romantic school

Raft of the Medusa of Géricault, the soft and sensuous *Birth of Venus* of Cabanel, perhaps a brilliantly red and blue and white and gold symbol of the age of chivalry and song, like *Le Chant d'Amour* of Burne-Jones:

> "Hélas! Je sais un chant d'amour,
> Triste ou gai, tour à tour,"—

and thence we will go on to that most characteristic of all nineteenth-century art-forms, the landscape, remembering a leafy Constable, a gorgeously prismatic Turner, a sibilant and dreamy Corot, a Millet with its sombre peasants immingled with the very flesh of nature. And then we will pass on to the impressionists—a Manet or a Monet, seeing their world not as a complex of lines and forms, but as a world of shimmering lights; and then a "Nocturne" or a "Symphony" by Whistler, proclaiming the kinship of the artist in colors and the artist in tones; and then a Cézanne, giddy with strange spaces, a Degas, mad with motion; and finally the whole topsy-turvydom of the post-impressionists—primitivists, futurists, cubists, oblivious to all save the impossible in their art—chaotic color, chaotic light, chaotic motion, chaotic thought.

Impressionism

What shall we say of nineteenth-century poetry? . . .

Poetry

In England the Romantic movement begins with the eager and visionary Shelley, championing the rights of man and ignorant of human nature; with the disdainful Byron, knowing men and despising them; with the solemn and childish, yet nobly meditative Wordsworth, seeing nature as the landscape painters saw it; with Coleridge, obsessed by strange spirits; and Keats alert in every sense to

the delicate impressions of a flowered and honeyed outer world.

Hard upon these comes the great Victorian group —more intellectual, less hopeful and beautiful— Tennyson, graceful, euphonious, timid, and uncomfortable—a mixture of beauty and disproportion, like to some exotic animal freed to browse in strange gardens; Browning, lungfully clamorous, with a busy brain and an awkward pen; the contained and satisfied Arnold and the quiet but troubled Landor, each, in his own way, striving to make green again the bays of Hellas; and the half-acclimated Fitz-Gerald bringing musk and myrrh from the ancient tombs of the East. Victorians

And then the final period: Kipling, and his anthropology; Swinburne, and such verbal music as no English poet had dared to dream; the bitter Henley, the humane Stevenson, Austin Dobson, light and *recherché;* the mystical and Catholic Francis Thompson, recalling Richard Crashawe; the Celtic Mr. Yeats, enamored of fay and faery; the stoutly British William Watson, damning Abdul Hamid and lamenting that *Fin de siècle*

"But yesterday was Man from Eden driven."

I have named but a few from each of these periods, but are they not enough to illustrate how, as the century aged, the spirit of poetry grew more restless and uncertain, passed from the familiar to the strange, seeking in other lands than their own and in other moods than men had known before, that consolation of beauty which their living years somehow denied them?

Is there a third parallel in the art of music? . . .

Modern music

At the beginning of the century stands the colossus, Beethoven, creator, one might say, of the modern orchestra, and the very image of nobility in music. Following, and not unworthy of the succession, comes Schubert; and you will recall the sublime chords which open the "Unfinished Symphony" in B Minor—reminding one of the grandeur of *Genesis,*

"And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters."

Schumann and Chopin, who are to the pianoforte what Beethoven is to the orchestra, are next in descent, and with Brahms, who continues the great tradition of German music, both for grandeur and architectonic form, the group of the proud pre-eminent is complete.

Romance

After the Giants the Titans! Tschaikowsky and Wagner is each huge—the Russian in things elemental and eternal—the illimitable sweep of the steppes, the deeps of a barbaric folk-soul brooding forever its immemorial past; the German in the scarce less ancient myths, filled with tenebrous shadows, shot with lurid lights, of the old northern forests and the old Scandinavian hills.

And then, in the great operatic capitals, those minglers of romance and music: Verdi, Gounod, Berlioz, Bizet; and on the outskirts, those who resurrected the souls of peasant-folk, and primitive folk, as Grieg for Norway, Dvorák for Bohemia, Paderewski for Poland, and our own Macdowell for the autochthonous peoples of America.

Folk-music

Finally, we have the new schools, striving to tell in tone what tones have never told, headed by Strauss, clamorous and violent and wilful, and by

the shy Debussy, full of furtive and evasive moods, indirect, fitful, fantastic, yet with a siren loveliness that draws one on in its vain pursuit forever.

Parallels

Such, as best I can describe it, has been the parallel course of the three arts in the century gone. All alike begin with a broad, dignified, still formal and contained art, firm and resonant from the tempering past. Alike all pass from this formal centrality into a wide-wandering search for new themes, new impressions, new modes of expression, and new artistic convictions. At the end of their journeyings they have enriched us—painting and poetry and music, each—with powers of technique unimagined by previous periods and with adventures of expression by no man heretofore attempted.

Flavor of decline

But for all this, in each art, there is an inescapable flavor of decline. The last end is in some disconsolate sense less sufficient than the first: we feel that the imagination of the century has greatly attempted, but we feel, too, that it has failed, though greatly.

And the final ebullition—strenuosities of cubical painting, iridescences of symbolist verse, nervous tensities and moody changes of coloristic music—this final moil and hurry seems little more than the froth of spent seas.

Perhaps I am wrong in this . . . some of you may think it is the swift on-rush of the renewed tide . . . as at times, I confess, I myself feel and hope. But whether it be the beginning of the new or the falling away of the old, we will not despair of the future of the arts. "Art is long," you have oft been told; and we need only to remember that it is born of instincts which, as Aristotle says, are

"Deep in our natures"

"deep in our natures," in order to look forward with serene confidence to the continued realization of beauty by the mind of man.

XII. THE PHILOSOPHY OF TRAGEDY

I

WE all remember Polonius' introduction of "the best actors in the world, either for tragedy, comedy, history, pastoral, pastoral-comical, historical-pastoral, tragical-historical, tragical-comical-historical-pastoral, scene individable, or poem unlimited." And if we have not been able to follow in its detail so nice a subdivision of dramatic art, I presume that most of us have, at one time or another, made some less ambitious classification of our own. At least we have recognized the broad distinction between the domains of Thalia and Melpomene, and we have asked ourselves, perhaps, by what subtle fascination the laughter and tears of the theatre do so englamour the imaginations of men, holding us in the thrall of illusion, and sending us, willing dreamers, to wander in fields remote from the serious duties of life.

Thalia and Melpomene

It is with this question that I would deal: by what philosophy can we explain or justify the sincere concern with which the men of so many generations have turned their eyes to the stage? Why should men of genius have so prized the players' mimic hours that they should have been willing to give the best of their effort to the theatre? And why should mankind, in reflective appraisement, place its dramatic literatures

so near to supremacy among things humanly precious?

The answer to such questions is by no means simple. It must rest upon a philosophy that can comprehend all the ends and forms of life and give to each its fitting value. It may begin with a merely æsthetic theory, but it can cease only with an insight into the nature and meaning of the world. It is small wonder that the greatest of philosophers have found this theme worthy of their study; and it is less wonder, perhaps, that only the greatest have been able to give solutions that have appealed widely to men's minds.

II

Aristotle on tragedy— *Poetics,* VI

"Tragedy"—and I am quoting S. H. Butcher's justly praised version of Aristotle's famous definition—

> "tragedy, then, is an imitation of an action that is serious, complete, and of a certain magnitude; in language embellished with each kind of artistic ornament, the several kinds being found in separate parts of the play; in the form of action, not of narrative; through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions."

Upon every phrase of this definition have been written volumes of commentary. It would be futile in a brief space to attempt even to call attention to the problems involved; nor is it necessary to do so in order to get at the root of Aristotle's philosophic conception, for this is defined, if not clearly, yet unmistakably, by two phrases, the first and the last of the definition.

"Tragedy is an imitation of an action"—this is the first; "through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions"—this is the last; and as the first gives us the key to Aristotle's conception of the essential nature of tragedy, so the last gives us his conception of its justifying purpose, first and last together answering the "What?" and "Why?" which seem to form the native sequence of interrogation on all matters which stir our human curiosity. Imitation

When Aristotle calls tragedy an "imitation," he is but echoing the speech of his time; for the Greeks regarded not only the drama but all forms of artistic expression as forms of *mimêsis,* as "imitations" of things and actions. Thus, the Greek dances, from which drama takes its origin, were conceived as a play of expression, imitative because induced through art. Plato says: The dance

> "Choric movements are imitations of manners occurring in various actions, fortunes, dispositions,—each particular is imitated, and those to whom the words, or songs, or dances are suited, either by nature or habit or both, cannot help feeling pleasure in them and applauding them, and calling them beautiful."

Similarly, music was felt to be an imitation of the mood or disposition which it stirred, and especially amongst the Platonists, to each of the recognized modes was assigned a gamut of imitated feeling: the Dorian mode exemplified dignity and courage, the Phrygian wildness and excitment, the Æolian warlike turbulence, the Lydian effeminacy,— Greek modes

"Lap me in soft Lydian airs,
Married to immortal verse
Such as the meeting soul may pierce
In notes, with many a winding bout
Of linked sweetness long drawn out. . . ."

Imitation in painting

The conception of the imitative office of the art of painting was even more naïve. Excellence in this art seemed in large part to lie in its power of producing illusion. Apollodorus, whose light-and-shade effects superseded the earlier work in line and flat tones, earned the epithet of "shadow-painter" because he painted men as they appear to be; Zeuxis is said to have depicted grapes so realistically that the birds pecked at them; and Plato, in an ironical vein, likens the art of the painter to that of a man who creates all things by the simple expedient of turning a mirror upon all in succession.

Thus the earlier and commoner meaning of "imitation," among the Greeks, was something very nearly the same as what we mean by "realism" in art. But when Aristotle speaks of tragedy as an "imitation of an action," he has in mind something more subtle and philosophical. As with most of his conceptions, the suggestion comes from Plato. Plato had conceived the world of sense and feeling—the world with which our five senses acquaint us and in which our daily affairs center,—not as the reality which common-sense tells us that it is, but as an imperfect copy or "imitation" of the true reality of which mind alone can give us knowledge. I might illustrate Plato's notion by the article of furniture whose sensible reality is the chair or table which we see and use, but whose sub-

Plato's conception

stantial reality, the chemist will tell us, is the molecular structure of its materials, visible only in the light of reason; the molecular substructure is thus the true form, or reality, of what we grossly perceive as a thing of sense, or of which our senses may be said to give us the imperfect copy. Thus the world of sense becomes a world of appearance and illusion, vaguely imitative of the invisible reality which we know through ideas only.

Plato's motive

This Platonic philosophy Aristotle adopted, but with an important modification. For Plato had held that the world of sense and the world of ideas have nothing genuinely in common, that they are indeed as remote from one another as the difference between a chair and an aggregate of molecules would suggest, and that the most we can hope in the midst of the world of sense is to be able to correct something of its outer illusoriness by a main reliance upon inward reason. It was because of this deep distrust of sense that Plato condemned so relentlessly the whole *motif* of art; imitating, as it does, he says, not the reality, but only imperfect and deceptive copies of realities, namely, the things of sense and feeling, it conduces not to knowledge but to deception, and is "thrice removed from the king and the truth." For which reason Plato rigidly banned all forms of art, save such as gave moral lessons, from his ideal republic.

Aristotle's modification

But Aristotle, while he adopted Plato's philosophy in its general outlines, was unwilling to follow in his sharp division of the sensible world and the real; rather, he maintained, while

it is true that our senses do deceive us, while it is true that sensible things are but imitations of the essential reality, still even as imitations they bear some impress of the forms which they imperfectly represent; and the whole discipline of knowledge consists in our ability so to profit by our experience of illusion as to be able at last to discern the ideal nature which is dimly present in the most deceptive phenomena of sense. Plato had cut the universe sharply into a realm of ideal reality and a realm of sensible illusion; but nature, says Aristotle, is not, like a bad tragedy, constructed of episodes; it is one connected, and dramatic, whole.

Retort to Plato's challenge

In this philosophy of Aristotle's the idea of "imitation" loses the somewhat derogatory cast which it possesses with Plato; it is no longer the fault of sensible things that they are but imperfect copies, deceptive imitations; it is their virtue that they *can* imitate the ideal reality, and so give us the clues of knowledge, leading us to the truth. So conceiving imitation, Aristotle was in the way to answer Plato's strictures upon art; and I make little question that Aristotle's *Poetics* is his direct acceptance of the challenge which Plato puts into the mouth of Socrates in the tenth book of the *Republic*. Socrates has just ruled, for the reasons which we have stated, that poetry must be banished from the ideal state; but he goes on to say of her:

Republic, 607

"Let us assure our sweet friend and the sister arts of imitation, that if she will only prove her title to exist in a well-ordered state we shall be delighted to receive her—we are very conscious of her charms; but we may not on that account betray the truth. . . . . And we may further grant to those of

her defenders who are lovers of poetry and yet not poets the permission to speak in prose in her behalf: let them show that she is not only pleasant but also useful to states and to human life, and we will listen in a kindly spirit. . . . . We too are inspired by that love of poetry which the education of noble states has implanted in us, and therefore we would have her appear at her best and truest; but so long as she is unable to make good her defence, this argument of ours shall be a charm to us, which we will repeat to ourselves while we listen to her strains; that we may not fall away into the childish love of her which captivates the many."

Defense of Poesy

This is the challenge which Aristotle accepts —as Sidney and Shelley and our own poet Woodberry have also accepted it in their several *Defences* of poesy. And Aristotle is in a position to make good his defence on the basis of his reinterpretation of the meaning of "imitation." For with him, as we have seen, "imitation," as we find it in nature, is the key to our understanding of what is ideal and perfect in nature; it is the guide to truth. And if such is the case with the works of nature in general, how shall it be less the case with the works of human nature, and especially of our clearest expression of human ideals in works of art? Plainly it is the mission of art also, even from its imitative character, to lead us into the ways of truth and understanding.

Idealization in art

Art, then, according to Aristotle, is an imitation of nature, not in her outward and sensible forms, but in her inner and essential meanings, in her *ideal* character. And he praises art in proportion to its truth to this ideal character. Our youth, he says, should be familiarized with the works of the painter Polygnotus, for Polygnotus depicts men, not realistically as does

Dionysius, nor satirically as does Pauson, but as "better than they are," as idealized men. For the same reason tragedy is a loftier form of art than comedy, for the writers of comedies demean their characters, while the tragic poet is a creator of heroes.

Meanings of *ideal*

Nor must we think that Aristotle is here confusing two senses of the word "ideal"—the sense in which it designates "the stuff that dreams are made of" with the sense in which it means what ought to be. For these two meanings were naturally identical in Aristotle's philosophy. This philosophy is what we moderns would call an *activistic* philosophy: the very essence of reality, according to it, is action, movement, development; reality does not consist in being present, but in being promised; reality is the form, or ideal, toward which, through material imperfection, the world is ever striving. "Action is the goal, and actuality is action," is his own phrasing. And because the end of enlightened desire and the formal objects of wisdom are both dependencies of this natural genesis, the two meanings of "ideal" coalesce.

Aristotle's activism

This same activistic view of nature leads Aristotle to count tragic drama as first among the arts. "For tragedy," he says, in one of the most notable passages of literature, "is an imitation not of men, but of an action and of life; and life is essentially an action, not a quality." The drama is great because it is an imitation, not of physical forms, but of evolutional *motifs,* because it is the completest image art can give of that life whose true being is, as Plato had said,

not in the world of sense, but in the world of spirit.

Poetic truth

I cannot dwell upon all the subtleties of this conception. I can only point out that from it flows that odd Aristotelian rule that the poet should prefer a "probable impossibility" to an improbable fact, and again his sagacious saying that "poetry is a more philosophical and a higher thing than history: for poetry tends to express the universal, history the particular." It is the universal alone which possesses probability; it is the universal alone which is truly knowable; and in a world whose universals are acts, not things, that art which deals directly with action —governed by the law of reason, which is the law of probability—will give us our maturest insights into the truths of life.

Thus in his very definition of tragedy, Aristotle has retorted upon Plato. Fidelity to truth and to the ideal reality Plato had made the ground for his rejection of poetic art; but the highest fidelity to truth calls for this very art, says Aristotle, for the poet's imitations of life are our most capable guides to the spiritual truth of nature.

III

Tragic effect

Our first question is answered. Tragedy is an imitation of an action,—an imitation not for the sake of producing an illusion of motion, as is the case with the cinematograph, but an imitation designed to reveal to us nature's actuating ideals in so far as these are manifest in our human constitution. The tragic stage is a mirror, but it is

the magic mirror which reflects back to us neither the bravery of our outward shows nor the humility of our outward asceticisms, but only the naked truth of our inward dispositions.

Aristotle's phrase

What, then, of our second question? What is the purpose of tragedy? . . . . You will recall the phrase in which Aristotle answers it: "through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions." Probably no phrase in the writings of Aristotle and few phrases in literature have occasioned so much discussion as has this one,—the main reason for it being that the passages in which Aristotle doubtless expounded his meaning belong to the lost portion of his work. In a recent edition of Aristotle's *Poetics,* perhaps the most scholarly yet produced, the late Ingram Bywater collates more than fifty versions of Aristotle's phrase, dating from the edition of Paccius in 1527 to that of Hatzfeld and Dufour in 1899. Bywater's own rendering is that tragedy must be furnished "with incidents arousing pity and fear, wherewith to accomplish the catharsis of such emotions."

Pity and fear

A comparison of the two translations which I have quoted—viz., "through pity and fear effecting the proper purgation of these emotions," and, "arousing pity and fear . . . . to accomplish its catharsis of such emotions"—will reveal certain of the differences that have animated the commentators. Does Aristotle mean that just pity and fear, and no other emotions, are to be aroused and purged by tragedy? or does he intend, as Bywater's version indicates, that

pity and fear are to be taken as typical of the *kind* of emotions appropriate to tragedy? Much controversial powder has been burned over this question, and indeed it is not altogether so trivial an issue as at first sight it may appear; nevertheless, Aristotle mentions explicitly but these two emotions, and it seems to me that we might properly assume that he meant no more,—at the same time allowing that for the Greek as for us the vocabulary of emotion was essentially a meagre one, giving small measure of the infinite range of feeling as we namelessly know it, so that Aristotle's conception of fear might well include the whole gradation from panic terror to reverential awe while his idea of pity could well comprise horror and shock at the one extreme and an almost divinely impersonal compassion at the other: with such elasticity of application open, the precise phrasing becomes a secondary matter.

Vocabulary of emotion

We may say as much for another difference that marks the two versions. Professor Butcher interprets Aristotle as claiming for tragedy "*the* proper purgation" of pity and fear; Professor Bywater substitutes "*its* catharsis," or purgation, meaning that there are other arts than tragedy which may purge the emotions. Undoubtedly Aristotle did recognize for other arts than drama the function of purgation, or catharsis, just as he recognized that other arts than drama are imitative arts; indeed, we may always say that what Aristotle asserts of tragedy in a general sense, *as a form of art,* he would assert with equal generality of other forms of art; his treat-

ment of tragedy is the key to his whole theory of art. Thus, in the *Politics,* he says of music:

Ethical melodies

"In education ethical melodies are to be preferred, but we may listen to the melodies of action and passion when they are performed by others. For feelings such as pity and fear, or, again, enthusiasm, exist very strongly in some souls, and have more or less influence over all. Some persons fall into a religious frenzy, whom we see disenthralled by the use of mystic melodies, which bring healing and purgation to the soul. Those who are influenced by pity or fear and every emotional nature have a like experience, others in their degree are stirred by something which specially affects them, and all are in a manner purged and their souls lightened and delighted."

But if the general function of art is thus a catharsis of the emotions, and tragedy possesses this function most capably only as being the loftiest of the arts, what are we to say is Aristotle's understanding of the process? And why is it a good? The real difficulties with Aristotle's phrase lie in this one word *catharsis,* which has been the talk of generations of critics. In what sense can art act as a purge or cathartic for our emotional nature, and what can so strange a metaphor mean when applied to feelings such as pity and fear?

Catharsis

Among the critics there are two dominant interpretations of this metaphor of Aristotle's. The one group gives the figure of a purge as near a literal interpretation as is possible in the connection. Aristotle belonged to a family of physicians, and the Greek medical term *catharsis* is rendered by its English equivalent *purgation.* The use of the term in reference to pity and fear implies, says Bywater, "the tacit assumption . . . . that the emotions in question are

analogous to those peccant humours in the body which, according to the ancient humoral theory of medicine, have to be expelled from the system by the appropriate catharsis." The other group of critics render Aristotle's term by the word *purification* or the Latin *lustration,* understanding it to mean something analogous to a religious purification of the soul from its drosser passions. The great name of Lessing is to be found among the supporters of this interpretation.

Purification

Between these two opinions—each of which, it appears to me, could be bettered by supplementing philology with some salt of psychological insight—there may be a middle view that will appeal to us as Aristotle's more reasonable meaning. But before stating it, let us recur to some of the historical antecedents of his thought.

Aristoxenos tells us that the Pythagoreans employed music to purge the soul as they used medicine to purge the body. This Pythagorean spiritual catharsis is clearly the source of Aristotle's conception; for Plato, in whose works it also appears, was as familiar with the thought of the followers of Pythagoras as was Aristotle with Plato's philosophy. It is in a passage of the *Laws* that Plato describes what must have been the Pythagorean understanding of the process. Plato is speaking of the affinity of motion and life:

Aristoxenos on Pythagorean music

"Infants should live, if that were possible, as if they were always rocking at sea. This is the lesson which we may gather from the experience of nurses, and likewise from the use of the remedy of motion in the rites of the Corybantes; for when mothers want their restless children to go to sleep

Children and Mænads

> they do not employ rest, but, on the contrary, motion—rocking them in their arms; nor do they give them silence, but they sing to them and lap them in sweet strains; and the Bacchic women are cured of their frenzy in the same manner by the use of the dance and of music. . . . . The affection both of the Bacchantes and of the children is an emotion of fear, which springs out of an evil habit of the soul. And when some one applies external agitation to affections of this sort, the motion coming from without gets the better of the terrible and violent internal one, and produces a peace and calm in the soul, and quiets the restless palpitation of the heart, which is a thing much to be desired, sending the children to sleep, and making the Bacchantes, although they remain awake, to dance to the pipe with the help of the gods to whom they offer acceptable sacrifices, and producing in them a sound mind, which takes the place of their frenzy."

The Bacchic women of whom Plato is speaking are the wine-maddened mænads who follow the god Dionysus in his wild revels of dance and song. They are the women who figure in *The Bacchantes* of Euripides, and indeed we may regard this tragedy as the dramatic portrayal of such a catharsis as Plato has in mind. We should remember, too, that Greek tragedy took its origin from these same Dionysiac revels, coming to be, in its artistic realization, a kind of vicarious purgation of the whole city from the madnesses with which the spirit of the god obsesses men. "Such feelings as pity and fear and *enthusiasm,*" Aristotle said, in the passage from the *Politics* which I have given; and there is significance in the addition of just this word *enthusiasm,* for it is the term whereby the Greeks designated the idea of being possessed by a spirit, and especially by the spirit of the god of wine.

Enthusiasm

Is it not plain that the catharsis which for Aris-

totle is the proper effect of tragedy is *both* a purgation and a purification—a relief from distempered emotion coupled with a quiescent broadening of our powers of sympathetic understanding? Sympathy is at once a gift of the emotions and of the imagination; it cannot exist in a state of inner and personal perturbation, the state that Aristotle calls fear; and, on the other hand, it cannot exist where the feelings are cold and unmoved. It is just the function of art, and above all of the drama, according to Aristotle, to purge or relieve us of the personal and disturbing element of emotion, while at the same time it stimulates our imagination to a compassionate comprehension of the suffering natures of our fellow men, and so, as a Greek might put it, to a purified insight into human life.

Sympathy and understanding

V

This is Aristotle's conception. But it is not yet an answer to Plato's challenge. Let me revert once more to the latter's criticism of poetry.

Plato's criticism of poetry—*Republic*, 606

"If you consider," says Socrates, "that when in misfortune we feel a natural hunger and desire to relieve our sorrow by weeping and lamentation, and that this feeling which is kept under control by our own calamities is satisfied and delighted by the poets; the better nature in each of us, not having been sufficiently trained by reason or habit, allows the sympathetic element to break loose because the sorrow is another's; and the spectator fancies that there can be no disgrace to himself in praising and pitying any one who comes telling him what a good man he is, and making a fuss about his troubles; he thinks that the pleasure is a gain, and why should he be supercilious and lose this and the poem too? Few persons ever reflect, as I should imagine, that from the evil of other men something of evil is communicated to themselves. And so the

Debauched emotion

> feeling of sorrow which has gathered strength at the sight of the misfortunes of others is with difficulty repressed in our own. . . . And does not the same hold also of the ridiculous? There are jests which you would be ashamed to make yourself, and yet on the comic stage, or indeed in private, when you hear them, you are greatly amused by them, and are not at all disgusted at their unseemliness;—the case of pity is repeated. . . . . And the same may be said of lust and anger and all the other affections, of desire and pain and pleasure, which are held to be inseparable from every action—in all of them poetry feeds and waters the passions instead of drying them up; she lets them rule, although they ought to be controlled, if mankind are ever to increase in happiness and virtue."

Such is Plato's arraignment of poetic art, and I think that no one who is familiar with the kind of emotional debauch which is so often confused with the true appreciation of art, can doubt the measure in which Plato's strictures are just. But is there a function of art to which they do not apply? and has Aristotle correctly pointed it?

Aristotle's answer

I think that both questions can be answered in the affirmative, and I think that Aristotle's famous phrase indicates both answers. At the same time it would be foolish to deny that this phrase must receive a large interpretation. What it means directly, we have endeavored to show; but what it signifies in a general scheme of things, in a whole philosophy of life, we can only infer from our general knowledge of Aristotle's thought,—for he nowhere explicitly states his case.

That philosophy differs from Plato's in an important particular which we have already stated: it is activistic, where Plato's is purely ideal; it is temporal, and we might almost say temporalizing, where Plato's is eternal, and

austerely reserved. Aristotle accepts an imperfect world of nature as an empirical fact, hoping for its redemption, but willing to take it for what it is; Plato sees in imperfection only the obstinate illusion which veils from us the truth that should be ours. Accordingly, art is for Aristotle a legitimate allegory of the understanding, while for Plato it is only the measure of our self-deception.

There is another and more personal and psychological reason for the difference in the two philosophies. It is obvious to any reader of Plato and Aristotle that Plato, who condemns art, is infinitely more moved by æsthetic charm than is Aristotle, who justifies it. "If her defence fails," says Socrates, and we know that it is Plato speaking his own inmost nature, "then, like other persons who are enamoured of something, but put a restraint upon themselves when they think their desires are opposed to their interests, so too must we after the manner of lovers give her up, though not without a struggle." Plato and Aristotle both were true Hellenes in their devotion to the maxim: "Nothing in excess"; self-control was with each of them the essence of virtue. But Plato was temperamentally an artist; before he came to know Socrates, he was a poet, and the music of poesy was ever ringing, Siren-like, in his ears. That he turned from her, rigidly and ascetically, is only the token of the glamour with which the figure of Socrates had seized upon his mind; for Socrates was the last of men to yield to emotion, or to permit the mists of feeling to suffuse his

Key to Plato's austerity

vision of truth. I cannot but think that Plato's absence from that last dialogue, where Apollodorus was rebuked for weeping, was due to his lack of confidence in his own powers of control and his shamed fear of showing weakness before his master. Plato's asceticism may thus, throughout, be but the spiritual self-protection of a nature too keenly sensitive to the charms and beauties of that sensible world which the love of truth had taught him to despise. For Aristotle there was necessary no such inner handicap, his was not the artist's temperament, but the scientist's; and he could survey with even gaze ugly and beautiful, true and false, apportioning to each human expression its proper human rôle. Thus, in his philosophy of art, he answers Plato, not directly by a refutation which could have been but meaningless to the Platonic temperament, but indirectly, by implication from his whole philosophy of life; for with Seneca he would say, "To me naught that is human is alien," and with Pindar, "The things of mortals befit mortality," and of the heroic past, which was the main theme of Attic tragedy, he could say with Vergil's wanderer:

Phædo, 117

Scientific calm

sunt lacrimæ rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt.

Mimic passion

There is one point further. Plato's criticism was in effect that art, in stirring our emotions, loosens our control of them, that moved by the mimic passions of the stage we stand to lose our sense of proportion, and in the emotional exigencies of life are in danger of weakly yielding to feelings which we should rise above. The

very lesson that Hamlet felt the stage ought to yield, Plato feared it would yield:

"O! what a rogue and peasant slave am I:
Is it not monstrous that this player here,
But in a fiction, in a dream of passion,
Could force his soul so to his own conceit
That from her working all his visage wann'd,
Tears in his eyes, distraction in 's aspect,
A broken voice, and his whole function suiting
With forms to his conceit? and all for nothing!
For Hecuba!
What's Hecuba to him or he to Hecuba
That he should weep for her? What would he do
Had he the motive and the cue for passion
That I have? He would drown the stage with tears,
And cleave the general ear with horrid speech,
Make mad the guilty and appal the free,
Confound the ignorant, and amaze indeed
The very faculties of eyes and ears."

The player's fury

Plato would have looked with abhorrence upon such an outcome, and Hamlet was too Aristotelian in his temperament to make it possible,—for want of reflection is not his besetting fault, nor emotional madness his weakness. As for Aristotle himself, no more than Shakespeare himself, would he have regarded this as the proper effect of tragedy. Rather, he would have said—and we may affirm this with confidence—that the knowledge of life which comes with the tragic catharsis will make us wiser and better-contained and more capable human beings, quicker to respond to life because of the quickening of our sympathies in the presence of the moving spectacle. "There seems to be in us," he says, "a sort of affinity to harmonies and rhythms, which makes some philosophers say that the soul is a harmony, others, that she pos-

Politics, 1340b

sesses harmony." Aristotle would not, with the Pythagoreans, say that the soul is a harmony; but he would agree with them that music is a proper medicine for a perturbed and cacophonous spirit, and we should not, as some critics seem to fear, be making a mere moralist of him in asserting that in tragedy, as in music, he beheld an agent which could purify and ennoble the harmonies of the soul.

Milton

I believe that this was Milton's understanding of Aristotle, as expressed in the famous introduction to *Samson Agonistes:*

> "Tragedy, as it was anciently composed, hath been ever held the gravest, moralest, and most profitable of all other poems: therefore said by Aristotle to be of power by raising pity and fear, or terror, to purge the mind of those and such-like passions, that is to temper and reduce them to just measure with a kind of delight, stirred up by reading or seeing those passions well imitated. Nor is Nature wanting in her own effects to make good his assertion: for so in physic things of melancholic hue and quality are used against melancholy, sour against sour, salt to remove salt humours."

Blinded heroes

The suggestion drawn from the old homœopathic medicine, with its doctrine of like-cure-like, we may pass as fanciful,—though I have little doubt that in Milton's mind it bore a very special significance in relation to the theme of the blinded hero of Israel which he, the blinded poet, was about to treat. But the conception that it is the office of tragedy to reduce the passions to just measure, and so to assuage the malease of a troubled and disconsolate life, was the Aristotelian lesson which Milton, more than most men, was in a position to learn.

And can we discover a nobler image of the true catharsis than is Milton's own poem?

Samson Agonistes

"Blind among enemies, O worse than chains,
Dungeon, or beggary, or decrepit age!
Light, the prime work of God to me is extinct,
And all her various objects of delight
Annull'd. . . ."

Too well we guess these words from Samson's mouth are Milton's own, as again we see Milton more than Samson in the bitter Puritan conscience that refuses forgiveness, not only to Delila, but to himself:

"I to myself was false ere thou to me,
Such pardon therefore as I give my folly,
Take to thy wicked deed. . . ."

But at the last, when the action is done, and the little deeds of earth are flitted away, the spirit is changed:

" . . . . no time for lamentation now,
Nor much more cause, Samson hath quit himself
Like Samson, and heroicly hath finished
A life heroic. . . ."

Transfiguration

And then it is, in the final chorus, that we come upon a transfigured Milton, rising, in the spaciousness of his spiritual insight, to a perspective of life within which the contentions and afflictions and harsh bickerings of a mortal lot are shrunken and meaningless,—just as the moil of troubled waters is seen as a passing glamour from the serene altitudes of sunny hills:

"All is best, though we oft doubt,
What th' unsearchable dispose
Of highest wisdom brings about,
And ever best found in the close.
Oft he seems to hide his face,

> But unexpectedly returns
> And to his faithful Champion hath in place
> Bore witness gloriously; whence Gaza mourns
> And all that band them to resist
> His uncontrollable intent;
> His servants he with new acquist
> Of true experience from this great event
> With peace and consolation hath dismist,
> And calm of mind, all passion spent."

Wisdom through suffering

Surely this passage—hauntingly reminiscent of the great Æschylean hymn to Zeus, "who hath set wisdom in suffering, and guideth men's feet in the way thereof,"—surely it brings to us the final image of the accomplished catharsis and the great end of tragedy. A "new acquist of true experience" whence should fall a "calm of mind, all passion spent": can Aristotle have meant other than this by that chastening of the passions which he makes the end of tragedy? Something of a broader understanding of life, something of the divine compassion for all things human, these, and the stout Hellenic virtue of a self-control that can proclaim reason king even in the midst of bodily distress,—these are the gifts which the Greek philosopher and the English poet alike saw to be the great gifts of true dramatic art. And bearing these gifts in mind, and judging art by our need of them, can we require a saner or fuller justification of our more worthy tastes?

XIII. ART AND DEMOCRACY

I

THERE is a well-known painting, representing the kerchief of Saint Veronica imprinted with the countenance of the crucified Christ, which the artist has so designed as to create a striking illusion. Apparently the eyes of the Christ are closed in death, but as you contemplate the picture, you become aware that they are open, gazing with a grave and solicitous penetration into your own. There is nothing sudden nor startling in the transformation; it is no spectacular miracle; but, as if in answer to your meditations upon the aspect of death, you discover in death's place an intent, though veiled life; and with no effort of the imagination, you give yourself into its possession, seeming (without distortion of nature) to participate in a transubstantial communion of spirit with spirit.

Saint Veronica's kerchief

To me this picture is a fine symbol of the essential truth of human life. We open our mortal eyes with unpremeditating curiosity; our sight is caught by outlooks flaming with lights and colors, or fading into sombre shadows, bright with the hues of gaiety or dark with tragedy; and even as we gaze, gradually these varied sensations model themselves into the regal features of Nature, whose veiled regard we responsively meet, striving to pierce to the spirit behind the still countenance. As by grace, as

Nature's veiled regard

by miracle!—for never could this be were it not that we are endowed from birth with an eye of faith, looking, with a belief ineffable to logic, for some revelation within the flame of sense of a spirit kindred to our own—kindred, even if divine, and compassionate. The poignancy of things human, and all that makes of the world a riddle, is this untaught and unswerving faith that the configurations given us by the senses are real only as symbols inviting our eager determination to penetrate to their meaning.

What is a man?

The thing we call a man is no stark material body, nor is its existence but a drifting phantasmagoria of pulsating cells. It is true that man, in his physical being, is to the physicist a transient complexus of number and motion; to the physiologist, an amazingly dramatic interplay of many-celled communes—trade-guilds of the bodily commonwealth, whose adherences to their hereditary crafts is health, whose rebellions we term disease; and that to the psychologist (if he be purist) man appears as a cinematographic sweep of sensations, full of flares and stops, now dense and smooth, now breaking into fragmentary incoherencies,—though always with some tantalizing relevancy of the parts never quite obscured. But to the metaphysician a man is something of an altogether other character. In his physical being he is an encasement, a carapace, a thing of cumbrous plates, narrowly creviced by the organs of perception, bunglingly contrived for the amphibious nymphhood of the soul. The real man, saith the metaphysician, is the being encarapaced; he whose purblind senses, like the

feverish antennæ of insects, desperately strive to feel out the essences of the world; or, changing the figure, he is the prisoner in the donjon-keep tantalized by the shafts of light piercing the lancet-windows far above and awed by the thin re-echoings of his own weak voice; or, nobly, he is the sage drawing the coverlet over the closing apertures of death-dimmed eyes and sending as his thank-offering to the god of healing the sacrificial cock, brave herald of the morn. Man, to the metaphysician, is essentially an effort; and the character of that effort, when it is truly defined, is neither for enginry of rigid nor artistry in phantasmal matter, but ceaselessly and intently for penetration of the fleshly screen of reality and insight into its heart.

Images of man's estate

Wonderful indeed it is, that, though imprisoned from birth, the soul is thus conscious of its prison. Stretching, craning, peering, it strives for light, and still more light; and it expends its strength and its ingenuity in the endeavor to create and refine keener instruments of penetration and ever more powerful glasses of reflection. Superb among all these instruments are language and reason; for the whole refinement of experience through abstractive thought and the whole dazzling mintage of speech rest upon a confidence in values, in things not grasped but meant, as if the whole world were bullioned by a store of pure gold of which our minted coins are true certificates. But more than this, these certificates, like coins, are communicable and exchangeable and heritable. For it is the most obdurate, as it is the most marvel-

Instruments of communication

ous, of all our faiths, that the redemption values of this universe are social and ideal and sustained by an eternal commerce of souls.

For though physically immured, though insulated by dense matter, the spirit of man is by nature gregarious, possessed of an insupportable longing for comradeship, and ever pathetically struggling to perfect its obstructed communication with fellows whose presence is known by faith only. All that we mean by love—aye, all that we understand by hate, too,—is inner measure of this faith; and all that we mean and understand by reason and by the whole gift of speech is its outward burning. We mortals, by the flesh, are separated from one another as by interplanetary spaces; but we surmise the unseen presences of kindred spirits, and we devise shrewd apparatus whereby, charged with our mating passion, our calls are imperiously sent abroad, while in the ceaseless perturbations of the sensitive receiver we eagerly puzzle out the half coherent responses. Moreover, and most mysterious of all the attestations of our yearning for fellowship, as we grow in body—wrestling like Jacob with the Angel of the Lord—we metamorphose the body; until in time, the physical form and countenance themselves become instruments of communion, character and desire alike written in their lineaments; so that of all the books of men, none are so subtly symbolic of the soul as are men's life-inscribed and life-prophetic features. Here, indeed, is transubstantiation, and, whether by holy or by baleful light, transfiguration.

Walls of flesh

Life a struggle for expression

Life, in all that can be called spiritual and that is in all that is truly life, is a struggle for expression and for the recognition of expression in a world whose one high virtue is fellowship. We are born, under stars beyond our ken, with a faith, for which reason can give no justification save that reason itself is its evidence, in the reality and rights of our citizenship in a cosmic democracy. Being so born does not give, let it be understood, assurance of participation in the citizen's benefits. Engrossment in sense means expatriation; selfishness is suicide. No man can be a true philosopher who knows only the closet; none a living artist who is immured in a tower of ivory; nor even the anchorite human and holy save God is with him in his cell. But all these, and all men, will find the treasure of freedom and the boon of inspiration only in reaching out beyond self and sense, only as they are aspirants for participation in the affairs of state, and counsellors of the high *res publica* of the world.

II

Truth of human nature

Mortal men are imprisoned men, and mortal life is a struggle for liberation through fellowship. This is the metaphysical truth of human nature, as saints have seen and philosophers have portrayed it; and if we study human activities from the points of view of such a presupposition, we find them all, in their various departments, taking on the form of language: all, industry, politics, science, art, religion, in

their manifestations appear as modes of communication, by which men express their impressions of the nature within which they are born and shadow forth to one another the desires and aspirations which this nature generates within their own souls. Life is a struggle for liberation through fellowship; its first condition, therefore, is mutual understanding; of which, in turn, the prime condition is a language which can convey the subtleties of experience from mind to mind.

Art an instrument of intercourse

The arts are the great instruments of this intercourse; and art, as a whole, may be best defined as the communication of imprisoned souls. This is true of the industrial arts, which express our practical and material needs. It is true, again, of the communicant edifices of religion and science, in which we express the valuations in terms of goodness and truth which we set upon the world. But in an especial sense it is true of the fine arts, which give our evaluations in terms of beauty; for it is these arts which, in last resort, form, as it were, the grammar of sense, and, by reason of the variety of their images and their character as imitation, serve to symbolize the other values. The practical, the good, and the true, all finally receive their communicable values from the fact that the mirrors of the senses, enlightened through art, may set upon them a gloss of beauty which is at the core of all desire and becomes the veritable gold of all spiritual commerce. Plato, with a double truth, likened the artist to one who holds up a mirror to all creation, catching therein the fleeting reflections of the images of things

ideal: for it is surely the imitative art which most of all unfolds to us the phantasmic character of this painted world, and leads us, with more supple intelligence, to penetrate to those living ideals which are as much veiled as revealed by its outer figures.

Fine Arts

All the conscious achievements of men's conscious desires are, in a true meaning, art. But with a very special meaning the fine arts are art *par excellence*. For it is their unique office to provide that final appeal by means of which the structures of industry are made dramatic, science is shown harmonious and whole, religion becomes communicant, and all civilization is given its panoramic power. More than this, and beyond all, it is these arts that limn for us the pageant of nature, portraying what in sense transcends sense and humanizing the superhumanity of all things remote. Whether it be in nature or in human nature, if we see structure, unity, harmony, it is with the æsthetic eye, and as a gift of that power, at once impersonal and intimate, which through the arts enables us to participate in all creation.

The mind's antennæ

The very forms of the several arts illustrate their essential purpose. Vision, hearing, language—these are the antennæ of our intelligence, whereby we explore the flavors and fibres of environment and establish our remote connections with kindred pilgrims. The sense of vision is, to a unique degree, the mind's parable. Our most ordinary speech is full of expressions which show our intimate dependence upon sight in the formation of ideas and judgments. We

ordinarily think of the higher powers of the mind as being supersensible, and indeed they are so; but for the communication of supersensible truths it is upon the metaphors of physical vision that we ultimately rely. The "light of reason," the "light of faith," the "eye of the mind," "spiritual vision,"—these are phrases so common that we are hardly aware of their metaphorical character. Hardly less concealed is the reference to the sense of sight in such words as "insight," "intuition," "reflection," "speculation," "imagination"—words which designate the subtlest and most supersensuous of the mind's powers; while again, for that inward state which marks the height of human experience, whether it be in the perception of Truth or of Beauty or of Goodness, we have but the one word "illumination." In a related fashion, the sense of hearing furnishes many of the tropes of metempirical thought; harmony is the true image of the necessary connection of ideas and of logic as it is the natural image of cosmic order and the singing spheres; rhythm makes clear to us the cycles of consciousness as it does the cycles of all creation. And finally, language, the "gift of tongues," has seemed to man from his primitive beginnings to be in some mode oracular and divine, while supreme among all the tropes of religious philosophy is the conception of the Logos, the "Word," as the participant image of the spiritual reality of the universe.

Vision

Hearing

Language

Thus, in their natural character, vision and hearing and language have a double relationship, giving them the native quality of symbols.

Private senses

They are, therefore, not private in the manner in which touch and taste and smell are private. These latter senses are intimately associated with the nutritive functions of the body, and hardly pass beyond such functions in their significance; they have to do with a chemical rather than a physical world, with a fluid rather than a structure; and they are all conceivably a possession of shell-enclosed mollusks. The sense of sight, *per contra,* reaches out to that which limitlessly transcends the body, to the fixed stars and to galaxies beyond the galaxy, while at the other extreme it is ineffective if the body be too nearly approached, holding its objects, as it were, at arm's length. Hearing, again, is the sense recipient, and is isolated as no other sense is isolated; for touch and sight, like taste and smell, commonly test and corroborate one another, but audition has no such natural ally; for which reason it seems abstract and ideal and impersonal in a degree beyond vision itself. Lastly, the very essence of language is communication; it rests upon the assumption of a transcendental world, spirit communing with spirit, out of all dimension.

Agents of liberation

It is these, then,—vision and hearing and language—that are the agents of our liberation from a narrowly bodily life; and it is wholly to be anticipated that through these should come our most intimate, because our least selfish, evaluations of life—what is called the impersonality of art, but is in fact only its unselfishness. Consider the fine arts severally. Plastic and pictorial art is but expressive vision. The painting and

Art and inward nature

sculpture and formal monuments which strew with magnificence the pathway of civilization surely represent a kind of imaginative restoration of the inner reality of nature as men have apprehended it; the pillars and arches of the forest, pyramidal mountains and columnar cliffs, have given the image of a world architect, as the manifold modellings of living forms and the shining fantasies of the skies have given the image of a divine sculptor and a celestial painter; and it is through interpretation of these outer images, projected to a cosmic scale, that men have come to a comprehension of their own lordlier selves: the image of Strife touching earth and sky is the measure, says Longinus, not of the Titan, but of Homer. Our modern art of painting, rich and gorgeous in all our galleries,—what is it, if it be not the varied reflection of the spirit of an age in which man has deemed himself, as never before, to possess a friendly mastership, based on comprehension, over a world of nature grown dear through a new intimacy? Science, in our day, has conducted us to the very portals of nature's deep sanctuaries; but it is art, and above all the painter's art, which draws the last veil from her face.

Objective emotion

The other arts, for other fields of nature, perform a like office. It is perhaps daring to speak of an emotional life of the world as an objective fact of the cosmic reality; yet I believe it to be true that the world possesses such a life, whereof our own human emotion is but a revealed and shared portion. And it is the art of the musician

to make this credible; it is his to find in his own emotions, and in their expression, the keys which open to our understanding the emotional changes of that universe in the midst of which we come into being. Certainly, there are few problems of æsthetics more difficult than is the analysis of the attraction of music,—which all men agree to be emotional, and yet in some sense impersonal. This is a paradox, for in our psychological descriptions emotion is the most purely personal of all psychic facts. But the paradox is surely resolved if we assume, as I believe we must, that the art of music is not a mere expression of private feeling, but a discovery of universal feeling,—and of feeling so universal that its tones and chords are harmonisonant far beyond the range of merely human experience. To this degree, at least, I am with the Pythagoreans.

Music

Of poetry it is surely not necessary to speak with detail. What it adds to logic is obvious to all men. Plato, had he judged according to his own practice, would have said that it is the image of the Good, measured by Truth and Beauty and Law; and we, in our more psychological manner, can but reiterate that it is through poetry—understood in the broad, as creative literature,—that we express that life of sentiment, which holds a middle place between ideas and emotions, for it is compact of both, and thus develops the whole motive of human conduct on the side that we name ideal. Poetry participates in the character both of the visual arts and the musical, uniting impression and ex-

Poetry

pression, thus in its essential form portraying the subtle give and take of all higher experience.

Such are the several arts, each a type of communication, in that truest sense in which communication is participation. In their forms they are diverse, to such a degree that it has been a puzzle to æstheticians to say what they have in common, what, indeed, is art. But on the view which I have expressed, this question receives an answer. Art is the communication of imprisoned souls; but it is that form of communication which is communion. Its forms are due to its instruments—vision, hearing, language. Its meanings are the multiplex tempers of human experience, the colors of all life caught in crystal and disseminated in prismatic play. Its understandings are the eagerness of our sympathies, whetted to imaginative penetration because of our embodied solitude. And its aim is to throw the whole world into its true psychical perspective, drawn from the vantage of human nature, but leading out to ultra-human horizons. In the interplay of expression and reception it creates, first, an ecclesia of man, whose image stands idealized on the high altars; and second, beyond this that broader communion of man and his creative world which is materially imaged in human states and societies and ideally in the city of God.

Art a communion

III

If life, in its humane essence, have that character which I have ascribed to it, of being a struggle for liberation from the solitary confine-

ment of bodily and animal nature and for the formation of a great spiritual republic in which men shall come to an understanding of one another and of their own more human selves through their subtler acquaintance with the world; and if the arts, and all art in its unity, serve that purpose which I have affirmed, of catching up from the dross flow of experience those elements which can symbolize its mutual values, thus establishing that intercourse which alone makes humanity conscious of its quality and alone makes its republican union possible;—then assuredly, there is some intimate connection between the forms of political states, as history has shaped them, and human realization of the true human good. Art, if it be the key to man's expression of his humanity and the instrument of its appraisal, can, in its achievements, never be less than an index of his success in the battle for humanity; and its association with this or that type of political state will in some measure be an attestation of political and moral values.

Art and political states

The history of culture furnishes a broad illustration of this connection between the power of art and the spirit of humanity. What is heritable in civilization is chiefly its art—chiefly its ideal expression. Political power is notoriously evanescent; economic strength is only less so. But whatever of dominion and riches the human spirit attains is prized in its own day and preserved in days beyond, forming in its long assembling the hereditament of culture: the broken marbles and torn papyri of the past are

Heritable culture

more precious than all the pearls and purples of kings and emperors.

Historical apogees

In the assignment of such treasures history reveals a simple plan. Art rises to its climaxes of excellence in closest association with political and religious movements—with those periods and forces in which men are most lifted up out of the narrow and animal self and into their humaner ideal self. It is in the effort to express moral conviction—using the word moral in the wide sense in which it expresses all conscious valuation of custom—that art arrives at its floruits. Periclean Athens, Augustan Rome, Florence under the Medici, Holland under the House of Orange, Elizabethan England, the France of Louis Quatorze,—these are some of the great periods, in each case be it observed, marked by or following a struggle for internal order or for external independence. "Liberty," said Milton, and he uttered no finer saying,—"liberty is the nurse of all great wits." The

Florists of mind

florescences of mind which I have enumerated are not all free in the same sense, some of them hardly free at all in our political sense of freedom; yet all of them are at least periods of conscious national independence, and of independence made conscious by the historical proximity of a threatened destruction or disruption. Furthermore, two of these periods represent the acknowledged climaxes of European art. Athens, from Marathon to Chæronea,

Democratic

from the birth of Socrates to the death of Aristotle, and Florence, from the incursion of Charles of Valois to that of Charles VIII,

from the exile of Dante to the martyrdom of Savonarola,—these two cities not only produced poets and artists, philosophers and saints, that are the very pattern of supremacy, but they also discovered and defined democratic liberty. On the other hand, if we take Rome under Augustus and France under *le grand monarque*—which of all monarchical periods glitter most with genius, —it is evident at once that the thought is weaker and the expression is more superficial, nay, artificial, than in the great eras of democracy. In these autocratic periods, representing social relaxation after peril and dissension, a philosophy of expression, a drama of manners, satire, ornament in art and life, replace the severer and sincerer striving for truth which marks the more troubled politics of the democracies. To put the matter by concrete comparison, the difference between the critical spirit of Aristotle's *Poetics* and Dante's *De Eloquio Vulgari,* on the one hand, and that of Horace's *Ars Poetica* and Boileau's *L'Art poétique,* on the other, is not that the latter are not concerned about truth and beauty, but that the truth and beauty which is their concern is infinitely less significant and less prophetic than is the austerer thinking of the citizens of democracies,—and this where the concern is primarily one of formal art. In periods of great political achievement men become highly socialized, that is to say, highly conscious of their human powers; and a great art is the natural consequence of such political greatness. Yet it is worthy of note that the highest artistic excellence falls to the demo-

Imperial

Aristotle, Dante, Horace, Boileau

cratic states,—partly, we must suppose, because of their more generous conception of liberty, and partly because it is the democratic state which attempts the most complex realization of our social humanity.

But it is not alone political humanity that is served by and that inspires art. In the growth of civilization, there arises early that sense of solidarity which we call national consciousness and which manifests itself in that communion of ideals which is the essence of nationality. But in a later growth nationalism is overpassed by internationalism, of which the primary and to our own day the most vital forms are religious.

International religions and art

The world owns three great international religions—Buddhism, Muslimism, and Christianity;—every one of which has at its heart the pulse of democracy, and is in a true sense to be described as a communion. Each of these religions has given rise to a great symbolic art. Indeed, what tithe of our artistic achievement would be left, if all that is inspired by these religions were taken from us? For religion, perhaps because its meanings are subtler, is most of all dependent upon art for its communication: the religious prophet,—Buddha, Mohammed, Jesus,—speaks in parables, and the altars of temple, mosque, and church shine with double-meaning tokens and the images of compassion. Salvation through faith is the great dogma of each of these religions; salvation through faith is the great dogma, also, of democracy, and indeed of human nature; wherefore it is small wonder that through many centuries and in

many lands minaret and spire have lifted up mute signs of human trust in a universalized humanity, or that every device of imaginative expression should have been brought to the service of so moving a conviction.

Democracy

"Liberty is the nurse of all great wits." Democracy—not in any narrow political sense, but in that sense in which it means simply men's common faith in the manhood of men—is the inspiration of art; and it is in proportion as the conception of democracy passes outward from the political and onward into the religious,—that is, in proportion as it becomes more truly spiritual, and more a communion, that art gains in breadth and vigor,—of which there is needed no better illustration than the beauty and richness of the Gothic art of the Mediæval ecclesia. Indeed, what religious faith adds to political faith is already before us on the pages of history. The political state is, in its essence, merely moral. It may be inspiring, as Athens, for a brief hour, was inspiring; but in the end it is not truly living, and the impression it gives is architectural and fixed. Its supreme temple is a temple of Justice, as Plato saw, and the Romans, with their courts, realized. But untempered morality tends always to simplicity and rigidity; hence, to unloveliness and to the loss of the power to inspire. Plato, with the moral state only in his eye, would banish art from its boundaries, except such simpler arts as might minister to the determined structure of the state. But we—before we can give allegiance—demand, with Adeimantus, that justice be shown to be the fairest.

Moral politics

Pagan and Christian virtues

Human nature, when it fully discovers its own needs, is complex in its demands. Justice is beautiful, and the virtues of the just state, which is the political state,—courage and temperance and wisdom,—these also are fair and shining when beheld in their untarnished truth. But there are other virtues springing from other than political communions,—the Christian virtues, which are the virtues of a consciously imperfect, and therefore of an aspiring world. Justice must be tempered with mercy, for the reason that men are enfeebled by ignorance, even when they seek the fair. Faith and hope and, more than all, charity, represent something beyond a political morality; they represent modes of conduct that can never be expressed in laws, for the reason that they can never be abstract and certain, but must be, always, concrete and experimental,—in a word, æsthetic. Life, as we experience it, is temporal and experimental, and it calls for temporizing as well as for regulative virtues. This is what religion adds to politics, and what, in its most beautiful form, Christianity adds; for it is the great teaching of Christianity that adventure and chivalry are truly and eternally spiritual. Man is a viator, said the Mediæval doctors; life is a pilgrim's progress; the hero is an errant knight, owing an allegiance and owning a faith.

Law versus Art

This contrast, Greek and Christian, of the virtues of the political and of the religious man, is the fundamental one of an abstract and merciless justice versus a tempered morality, of Law versus Art. We feel that virtue and beauty should invariably agree, but in our experience

they often seem to draw in contrary directions; and then it is that we condemn the inspiration of the polity as insufficient and turn to religion for something more profoundly satisfying. Temptation, it would appear, is a part of the order of nature, even of our own nature; and it is only religion that deals fairly with temptation, consoling it with charity. Plato had glimpses of this truth, when he turned from his dialectic to his myths, and Aristotle gave it his own characteristic formulation. "Poetry is a higher and more philosophical thing than history," he says; and it is so for the reason that it can convey the tempers as well as the facts of life, and so bring to our own souls the purification of understanding; and the tragic hero should be "a good man, suffering through frailty or error," because life is struggle and a problem, a struggle for the good and a problem of mutual understanding,—not merely the illustrative solution of some natural law.

Poetry and History

IV

Let me return upon my theme. Life, I began by saying,—human life is in its essence an effort: the effort of a soul imprisoned in its own natural realism to escape into what is no less its own, even though never selfishly its own, humane idealism. The escape is never effected, the realism never truly evaded, for the good reason that a man is an animal, bound by animal senses and appetites. On the other hand, the idealism is never exhausted, nor can it be, without the animal losing the nature of man; for idealism is not

Natural realism and humane idealism

only the great communion of humanity; it is itself what makes man humane. To put the matter in Aristotelian language, the ζῷον πολιτικόν which is man gets its humanhood from what is political in its constitution—understanding "political" in its broadest and most spiritual significance.

Equivocacy of art

It is this humane idealism, striving to establish the human polity, which comes to expression (and this was my second point) in the forms of art. Art is the ritual of the communion, and the symbol of its mystery. Being a ritual and a symbol, art is, however, necessarily double-natured—participating alike in sense and idea,—and therefore in no small degree equivocal. A certain blindness and fumbling is inherent in all symbolism, which art, least of all, escapes, for the very reason that its symbolisms probe so far. The expression of beauty is dissatisfying because of the very greatness of the undertaking, and indeed the noblest of such undertakings are the least complete.

Nobility

Nay, what is nobility if it be not a recognition of incompletion? The goods that men recognize are not at all harmoniously attainable; in the realization of some, others are made impossible; and it is just in their willingness to surrender what is privately and personally dear in the interests of what is publicly important and spiritually precious that men are endowed with nobility. Of which the expression is that life of cities and states and of great religions, whereof the heritable images are the works of their artists. Upon this, also, I have touched, indicat-

ing that not only is there a higher virtue in the political man than in the private, and in the religious man than in the political, but also that the office of the artist becomes more important and significant in proportion as the virtue to be communicated becomes more subtle: in brief, that the symbol of Justice is at once more simple and less moving than the image of Faith, and that even a political society which rests on faith, as does democracy, makes a more sensitive use of art than is aught that but ministers to the glitter of autocracies.

Mingling of real and ideal

Such has been my argument. From its statement there are to be made, I think, certain clear deductions. The first of these is that life and art are complex for the same reason: namely, that in both there is a mixture of the real and the ideal, a contradiction of the given and the intended. Art, we are told, is the criticism of life; and this can only mean that art is our most self-conscious expression of human nature. From this self-consciousness it gains that power of communication between individuals which, in the end, amounts to a mediation between man's private and animal and his public and spiritual desires—a mediation never quite successful, for the reason that the two can never be wholly in harmony.

Human frailty

This leads to my second deduction. Art, to be true, must represent the problem of human frailty. This was Aristotle's great judgment, founded upon the insights of the Greek tragedians. Goodness and beauty do not actually coincide in human experience; justice is not in-

Faith and fact

evitably the fairest. Our faith in the universe (for we have a faith which is as ineludible as is our aspiration after humanity and of which this aspiration is the expression)—our faith in the universe is not borne out by the facts of experience, at least, not with rigor and satisfying completeness. We men are embogged in evil to such a degree that at times it is only our struggle for freedom that keeps us aware that we are men. This is the fact which makes tragedy, and instils in us that fearful sense of doom which ever impends upon the throne of beauty. Yet in one thing we may take heart. Tragedy was a simpler and more expressible thing for the Greek than it is for the Christian; for to the Greek the antagonism of goodness and beauty was a discrepancy of human and divine law, of the political with the religious communion: and this the Christian has solved in placing the emancipating above the regulative virtues and in giving to faith (of which charity and hope are but the present and future tenses) the last reprieve to salvation.

Free choice makes morality

Let me re-state this last point, for it is important. It is not command and obedience but problem and free choice that make true morality: the parable is a more penetrating lesson than the commandment. Reason calls for strict justice; but nature tempers all stringencies of form,—including that of justice, including those of reason. For reason itself, truly understood, is but choosing; vital reason, therefore, and the only reason worthy devotion, is a choosing between balanced, problematical issues,—a choice in

which the judgment rendered involves some loss of ponderable significance. The reasonable life is set in a context of problem; and human nature, if it would be rational, must be beset with dubieties. "They are not skilled considerers of human things, who imagine to remove sin by removing the matter of sin," says Milton; and it is equally true that an implacable reason, drawn to no error, could be but reason's whole denial, mechanical and meaningless. As with reason, so with justice and her kindred virtues: they are needed only in the face of trial and peril; they are significant only when experimental; they are beautiful only when touched with some sacrifice. It is faith alone that can make authentic such choices, proclaiming which is the lesser and which the greater good,—faith alone which makes the final purification of reason a love of truth, the final purification of conduct a love of the good, the final purification of our whole ambiguous life a love of beauty.

Vital reason

Human nature rests frankly, and for its very existence, upon the number and importance of its problems. It is moral because it is tempted; it is rational because it is puzzled; it is gifted with faith in the unseen because it is helplessly absorbed in the seen. These are not paradoxes, but obvious facts; and they are facts which have direct bearing both upon our estimates of the values of our forms of association, political and ecclesiastical, and also upon our conception of the probabilities for the expression of these values in the arts. If we base our judgment upon history, we must say that it is in demo-

Paradoxes of human nature

cratically organized societies that science, morality, and art have come to their finest attainment. In the light of the analysis which has just been made, this is altogether what ought to be anticipated of the future. For it is in democracies that the problemic nature of life is most present and most recognized; in democracies that reason is most alert, and solutions are least near. In the autocratic state the moral rule is simple and rigid, and art is but its witty exposition. But in democratic societies, with their never-ending contests of wills and desires, the law is never stated and never complete; virtue and beauty never wholly coincide; and art never satisfies the problem of their reconciliation.

Life in democracies

It is this very failure of fulfillment which makes the cultivation of the arts, and in particular of the fine arts, of such deep concern to democracies. The democratic state—let me repeat—is the state above all others which recognizes the complexity of the human element in human nature: political manhood. It is the democratic state which gives the greatest degree of individual responsibility to its citizens, and therefore recognizes the variety of moral interests and the importance of selective reason. It is thus the democratic state which encourages the greatest range and intensity of human intercourse. The thing we call freedom of speech we justly feel is a primary token of the liberal state. But it is surely in place to point out that this freedom is no merely individual or private privilege; it does not exist as the consequence of an act of license, and it does not signify merely a

Political manhood

release from the inhibitions of caution. Rather, free speech gets both its quality and its value from the fact of a certain milieu of established intelligibility,—a community of ideas resting upon community of experience and pointing to a community of purpose. Free speech is essential to democracies primarily because democratic citizens are one another's judges and encouragers in a task which is being created by a common assent even while it is being performed.

Free speech

And all arguments which can be urged for free speech repeat themselves for the cultivation of the arts in democratical societies. The arts are but forms of discourse which appeal to other than our verbal intelligence. Because of their power to give emotional, æsthetic, moral, religious values to ideas,—that is, to convert ideas into sentiments, and hence make them moving, —they are of the greatest consequence in such a pragmatic society as democracy must ever be. The ecclesia of democracy is in an especial degree a church militant, ever contending with its own imperfections, and thereby ever discovering the unguessed possibilities of human insight. In a fair sense the true democracy may be described as a congregation of artists. The citizens are ever reading the face of nature and giving forth their imitations of it, in the intense effort to make themselves known to their fellows; and as a reward, they are ever deciphering in the countenances and deeds of their fellow men the reflected images of their own souls. This is the public life of the state in its best realization and most perfect office: devoted to the creation of

Art of the citizen

that communion of the understanding which is the holiest of all sacraments, since in delivering human nature from its baser elements in the finer it reveals man's portraiture of God.

V

Genuine democracy is spiritual

At the outset of my discussion I chose the Christ of the miraculous kerchief as an image of human life, showing by a symbol that duality of regard which is to be found in most of our conduct and in all of our reflection. There is an escape—so the kerchief seemed to say—from that web of sense and passion which we name a body into the serener life of idealized desires which we call humanity and believe to represent our worthier selves. But this humanity—as the image suggests—is no outward physical thing, nor no institutional thing; rather, it is spiritual and metaphysical, and it is of the nature of a great communion, open to all men who by inspiration or effort make the discovery of their own profound faith in it. It is a communion partly conscious, no doubt, in all the states and societies, political and religious, organized by men,—perfectly conscious in none of them. But those societies in which it is most conscious, and therefore truest, are democracies, whether they be civil or ecclesiastical; for it is in democracies that men are most put upon their mettle, as individuals, and most trusted with one another's interests, as citizens. Democracy is, therefore, in a special degree spiritual; and because spiritual it is free. For those who understand it, its ends will not be sought in material

welfare, nor in those co-operative efficiencies which are most possible when ends are simple and mechanical—as warfare, for example, is simple and mechanical. Neither will they be sought in institutional pomp, nor in monumental splendor, nor in any showy surfeit of private appetites and ambitions. But they will be sought —where alone democracy is meaningful—in those arts which most show men's loves for the impersonal, and which most lift them up from the material self.

Physical forms and metaphysical things

Physical forms, on such an understanding of life, are valuable in proportion as they express some temper of metaphysical things, in proportion as they are symbols that further the understanding. That is why works of art, and especially of those fine arts whose objects have no value save expression, are the most significant and precious of all works; and that is why, out of the past, we painfully piece together the broken fragments or edit the torn pages that tell what men once loved. But more than this, even the bodies of men are moulded by our human desire for communication and take on the forms of desire, and their countenances become imprinted with the quality and genius of the state in which they live: so that we say of one human face that it is that of a democrat, of another that it is aristocratic, of another that it is imperious—representing institutions engraved into the flesh.

Portraits, indeed, are the most convincing of political lessons. As I turn the pages of Anton Hekler's striking collection of *Greek and Roman*

Greek and Roman portraits

Portraits, I am impressed once and again with the fact which Plato makes the heart of politics —that the character of the citizen images the character of the state. The Greeks were democrats, not by right of the perfection of their democracy, but by the right of its discovery, and the fact is written and underscored in the humanity of their countenances. Nor is this character to be found merely in the features of the acknowledged great—the compassionate Euripides of the Naples Museum, the calm-eyed Pericles, the idealizations of the beautiful soul of Socrates transforming a grotesque mask: these, indeed, are such images as only a people inspired by nobility could produce; but it is faces of the unknown that are most moving, men and women, youths and elders, all touched with a beauty that is never serene, for it is the beauty of mortal men gifted with a vision of things higher than mortal. Turn, then, to the faces of the Romans. Cicero's is the finest of them, with a bitter, patrician refinement,—far, in the scale of humanity, from the grave solicitude of the Vatican Demosthenes. But the emperors — Claudius as Jupiter,Commodus as Hercules, the theatrical Nero of the Uffizi,—even Augustus, the best of them, what is he as compared with the images of Alexander? While as for the unknown, there is a hard, encrusted brutality that repeats itself through a seeming impossibility of variations. There are, to be sure, exceptions (astonishingly few): Romans who might be Greeks, Hellenistic Greeks who might be Romans. But in the main, it is cold formality as

against an eager and wistful beauty,—men and women alike.

Ideals create expression

I cannot believe that this difference is an accident of race. Rather it is a product of ideals and of the institutions which embody them. The Greeks discovered democracy, and although they had little more than a glimpse of a promised land, it transformed their bodies as well as inspired their art. The Romans, early yielding to that blindness which men call practical sense, or in politics the politics of realities, thereby lost all that was noblest in the civilization which the Greeks handed on to them, and entered upon a course whose steady degeneration is preserved to our view in their portraits. It is, of course, difficult to pass judgments upon one's contemporaries with the clarity with which judgments upon the past may be pronounced,—least of all when the matter is the subtle one of spiritual expression. Yet it seems to me certain that one who is sensitive to artistry will find the ancient contrast repeated in the modern world, and for the same fundamental cause. What nation among us, if not France, is the leader in the finer arts, as she is in that high and political conception of humanity which is their inspiration?

Man's humanity

I have yet a word to add. For in emphasizing the fact that man's spiritual inheritance is his participation in the great commune of humanity, I may seem to have denied that it has any perdurable meaning for the individual. This is far from my intention. For I firmly believe that just as it is democracy which most keenly awakens the individual to the fullness of that effort which

is his life, so I believe that it is in the fulfillment of democracy, in becoming a citizen of the spiritual commune, that the individual finds himself most truly and directly. I should put it in this fashion: that in the true democracy all the citizens are, as it were, naturalized through their discovery of the ideal citizen—a kind of Platonic man, who is the type and pattern of what they most value in human character. In serving this Platonic man, they serve the best that is in their own souls and the best that is in one another; while from a converse regard, the existence of the pattern may be taken as the highest expression of that faith of man in man which is the sanction and crown of all democracy; it is through the image of perfection that men are saved.

The Platonic Man

Surely it was such an ideal that inspired the artists of Athens. They beheld their fellow citizens each touched with the spirit of Athena, each ennobled because of the spark of the goddess,—and with no loss of individuality, but rather with their individualities eternally enhanced because of their membership in that city. Not Æschylus nor Pericles nor Socrates nor any other was the ideal Athenian, though each participated in his nature and each, as best he could, conformed his character to that nature. How richer a man he was than any pattern Roman! —richer, because more a man, because more humane, as democracy is more humane than empire. And if we turn to that democracy which in our recorded history has proven so vastly nobler than any political society,—if we turn to

The pattern Athenian

the great ecclesia which has created Christendom, can we learn any other lesson than that the most exalted of spiritual missions is still the portrayal of the pattern Man, and that the last word of human wisdom must still be Ecce Homo! Behold the Man!

XIV. HEBRAISM AS A MODE OF PHILOSOPHY

I

A world's self-revelation

WE of today live in an hour preternatural. The world of men has been convulsed in a sudden and terrible agony. Fired with its own passions and consumed in its own fevers human nature has suffered such a revelation of its own inward constitution, of its depths and its heights, its blacknesses and its nobilities, as comes to the race of men at unforeseen periods, trying them with crucial pains, and working upon them like a potent medicine for their elimination or their purification. We of today are like men risen weakly after the passing of a delirium. Our vision is still dazzled and uncertain, seeking the new light, but obscured by the fugitive shades; our hearts are still anxious, quickening with rising hopes or sinking heavily back into dead obsessions; the blood of our life and the breath of our life are still tense and throbbing, and there is a ringing of voices, out of the past, into the future, summoning us insistently into ways that have known us not. The hour breaks hugely upon us, and we stand certain of our sin, uncertain of our redemption, as naked souls before a Judgment.

There was, but a brief time past, one great

and blessed ray of illumination. When the last gun seemed fired and the last shell seemed burst and peace was shouted throughout the four quarters, men rose up with a cheer and sang pæans to the new day. The piaculum had been rendered, the offering had been made, and though the blood of the sacrifice was still undried in the trenches, men felt that their burden had rolled from them and that the day of their salvation was at hand. But not so easily, not so cleanly do we clear us of the peril of our souls. The past, histories old and history new, sets a living seal into the substance of all flesh, and the wounds heal slowly and the mark is for all time. In the whiteness of the morning we shouted with joy, looking to the East, but with advancing day we turned to one another's faces, and our countenances became troubled. The gladness has faded away, and the world, inward and outward, has grown gray and turbid. On my own native prairies, many a time I have seen a glorious and exultant dawn swallowed up by swift-oncoming bands of ashen cloud, until the whole heavens were obscured with their murk, and what had promised to be a day of splendors became transformed into a dimness of driving rain against which the journey must be urged, retarded by muddied roads, doggedly, tenaciously, cheerlessly, certain only of the coming night, hopeful only of other and purer suns rising to other days to make creation fair. Such a dawn, brief and symbolic, we have beheld, and into such a day we are entering, conscious that our lives must be the lives of wayfarers, that the expiation has

Joy of peace

Aftermath

not yet been fulfilled, and that the great radiance lies beyond us.

The goal of civilization

The men and women of all races and nations are struggling onward, less strong than weak, less seeing than blinded, into a day of obscurity and darkness. We of the United States are of their company. It was the great Mediæval poet, speaking as such a statesman as perhaps poets and prophets alone come to be, who proclaimed:

Dante, *De Monarchia*

There is not one goal for this civilization and one for that, but for the civilization of all mankind there is a single goal, the branch and flowering of that stock whose single root is our universal human nature. Seeing ourselves with a near and flattering eye, it is our wont here in America, and our fatuity, to adjudge ourselves happier and more secure of happiness than are other peoples. But in the tale of the centuries and the count of the ages we shall appear yoked to our fellows, as mate to mate, and our one possible virtue will be that we may be shown to have pulled with a little more strength, a little more steadiness, in that toil which yields us our bread, physical and spiritual. There is a goal of all civilization; the past has moved toward it; the present is moving toward it; it is in the pulse of all men; it is in the respiration and the aspiration which are the measures of all human life. We of America can neither evade nor overpass this goal; nor should we seek so to do; for in it, as all our fellows, we live and move and have our being. The future of mankind is our future; for we, too, are men.

America's place

There is a single goal of all civilization. This

is the fundamental upon which we must build our conception of human endeavor. But I do not understand, and I do not believe that so great a thinker as Dante could have understood, that this fundamental truth implies that the principle of civilization must be uniformity. For the realization of a world in which all men shall be humane it is assuredly not essential that all shall speak a common tongue, or recite a common creed, or that all shall live under a single government or under like forms of government, or that in arts or manners they shall follow an unchanging pattern. The unity of civilization is not to be sought in uniformity, but in harmony—indeed, in the richest possible harmony which is at all compatible with unity: for it is the very trait of civilized life to be lifted up from the monotony of savage life, to become complex, ramified with specialization, varied with subtle dissonances, accordant through the instrumentation of manifold interdependences. The very word civilization, as it were, summons man from the simple and primitive into the midst of the profusion, the labyrinthine order of great cities. It is there, in court and mart multifarious with life, amid centers of traffic and before houses of state, where all is chaotic to the eye, yet all is synchronized as by a single clock and ordered by an accepted law, that we find our proper image of human civilization in its eventual entirety; and thinking upon this image we realize that the citizen of the future must in some fuller sense than we have understood be a cosmopolite, and that the world of men must become a cosmopolis.

Uniformity not its principle

Its image

Cosmopolitan harmony

Civilization does not mean uniformity; it does mean harmony. This, be it understood, is not a rejection of the principle of limitation; rather, it is the assertion that limitation is essential to civilization. The possibilities of life are not infinite; not all variations are profitable; not all differences are endurable. There are forms of government, there are customs of oppression, there are darknesses of superstition known to the past, which we could ill afford again to endure, and which assuredly the future shall not know. There are races of men who have walked their unseeing way and who are gone forever, and there are races among the living who are fated to a like oblivion. If these words seem cruel, conceive what shall be those men who shall live in a period of the future as far from us as the period of the first men is remote from us in the past, and ask these men of the future whom, among us of today, they will recognize as their kindred? A feature, a trait, a reverberation of thought, a dream—beyond these we shall not be known. The process of human change is a process of elimination as well as of accession, of limitation as well as of variation; not alone of growth, but also of purification.

Analogy of music

Permit me to revert to an illustration which my words may have already suggested. Civilization is a harmony. Unity is its fundamental; its variety is composed of those melodic tones that fall within the law which this fundamental establishes, departing from it but to return to it, enriching through accord, enhancing through

contrast, but always obedient to its scale. The art of music, as we know it, conforms to principles which are very profound in nature and in human nature, and true with a lasting truth. But its proper materials were not discovered in a day. Out of infinite noises, shouts, percussions, twangs, thrums, the notes and the intervals were selected and refined, and the orchestral keys were set as a law and a limitation. Then alone was symphonic unity made possible and the chant of choric voices. So also shall be our discovery of the whole art of living. Deep in our natures are its principles and its tones are sonant in our lives; but in the past they have been and in our own day they are still engrossed in the clamor and friction and blare of an unpurified world. In some fairer future, under some happier sun, men will have discovered their gamut and their law, and all the varied notes of their aspirations will swell as a majestic chant orchestrally to heaven. For us, gropers after art, it is but given to catch from the noisy air elusive melodies, prophetic of that day. Such, I believe, is the condition today throughout the whole world of men. Everywhere there is a challenge ringing in the ears, carried as by Æolian winds, and everywhere peoples are striving to perfect the instruments of their life, to render them, if may be, more capable of the sustained harmonies which the spirit of man dreams even if his hand may not yet execute them. People by people and nation by nation the attunement is being made, and while there are raspings and discords not a few, still we are all, we men,

Symphonic unity

as an eager audience forgiving the jangle of preparation in our anticipation of the glory of the music.

II

Our United States

And as is the whole world, so in a special and nearer sense the United States is in the medley of a preparation. Our national problem is analogous to the world problem, and our effort analogous to the world effort. For we, in our own scale, represent a dissonance of instruments, an inharmony of racial and social groups which have yet to discover the law of their accord. We are certainly, one and all, inspired by the same great theme of melodic life, by an ideal composition which shall be our nationality of the future; but we have as yet not mastered or perchance discovered our several parts, and some, I fear, have as yet not perceived the richness and variety which must enter in to make the fullness of its harmony. For the moment there are many who strive with uncertain hands, many who hear only their own notes, many who conceive no power or form beyond a simple unison or the repetition of accustomed figures: they are honest citizens, they are stout Americans, but they have yet to learn that the magnitude of the anthem of the future will come from the voices of a multitude of choirs, each with its part, each with the timbre of its own training and tradition. American citizenship of the future must be, like musicianship of the highest order, an ability to bring the instrumentation of

many races and many peoples into one mastering harmony.

The charted sphere

I speak of the future; its indications are in the present; and they will be seen, I think, if we but throw into perspective the total human economy of our habitable sphere, as history has so far revealed it. It is but four hundred years since Magellan circumnavigated the globe, dividing it once for all into an Eastern and a Western Hemisphere, an Old World and a New. In the brief intervening centuries every land has been charted, every region explored, the whole of Earth mapped and surveyed. It has been given to us here to live in the day of the climax and completion of this work, for it is in our day the mysteries of the two Poles have been uncovered and the mysteries of the heavens above us conquered by the craft of men. Our generation knows, as no generation before us ever knew, the full human possibilities of Earth, our demesne, its climes and its tempers, its bounties and its limitations, its hospitalities and its inhospitalities. Dissolved forevermore are the imaginings and hopes and illusions which for thousands of years haunted the minds of civilized men with visions of Isles of the Blessed, of Ultima Thules, of Lost Continents, of Promised Lands and Lands of Refuge. We have staked our claims; we have taken our titles; we have broken the furrows of our boundaries; the plumbline is set in the midst of peoples. What in this Earth men can be, we know, and what they cannot be.

Staked claims

And in this broad economy, here at the be-

ginning of the twentieth century, what of the United States? what is the rôle of our North American mountains and plains and vastly watered fields? As I consider the mapped globe and the peopling thereof, my own mind irresistibly moves backward to the figure of a venerable old man whom years ago I heard lecturing upon our country's destiny. He was not a man of learning; he was unschooled and plain; but there was a fire of zeal in his eye, and his long beard, as of one coming out of the wilderness, and the sudden animations of his theme, gave to him the aspect of a veritable prophet. He unrolled a map of North America, and pointing to the confluence of the Mississippi, Ohio and Missouri rivers, expounded his apocalypse. The rivers, he said, are surely the Rivers of Paradise, and the broad plains, extending from the Alleghanies to the Rockies, what are they but Eden itself—the Eden whence man had been expelled for his first sin and to which he should return for his great Millennium? Behold, he said, their great figure, set like a divine seal upon the continent, for in their form they symbolize the union of the faiths of the West and of the East, and the unity of the peoples of the whole world: taken together the three rivers are, as it were, the Cross of Christendom, whereas the Ohio and Missouri forming the arms of the Cross, form also, by themselves, an almost perfect Crescent, the Moon of the Orient. Here Europe and Asia are united in the final realization of human blessedness upon Earth.

A prophet

Eden restored

Fantastic as is this image, it nevertheless con-

veys something of a truth which every American should be brought to perceive. The peopling of this New World land is from all the continents of the Old. Amid race after race, people after people, of the anciently settled lands, men have been stirred in imagination and in hope by the rumor of a country beyond the seas which should be for them as an inheritance to be entered into, opened in a new spirit of liberty, governed by a new and purer justice, gifted with a deeper and prouder humanity. And race after race, people after people, they have come, until the plains of America are as a place of assemblage and a gathering together of the nations.

Gathering-place of nations

Each of these peoples has come with its own color of hope; each with its own promise of work. It is now almost precisely three centuries since the first-comers of my own race found out the New World shores; and in those three centuries, the Anglo-Saxon, in the beginning alone, later on aided by other peoples, has accomplished a labor whose tradition is stalwart and proud. For to him fell the pioneer's task and the post of honor in the vast work of opening up wildernesses and of laying the foundations of cities and of states; and to him it has been given to spread the language and to frame the fundamental laws of the greatest of New World polities. But it has not been, it is not, and it cannot be his alone, by any right of occupation or pre-emption, to shape and limit the whole content of the life of the city whose foundations he has laid. The building up of a civilization, let me repeat, is complex of aptitudes and powers drawn from

Anglo-Saxon pioneers

many races and from many traditions of culture.

The future

And the future civilization of the United States, the future Americanism, while it shall surely retain, doubtless as its prevailing tone, the color of Anglo-Saxon institutions as here acclimatized, must and should be enwrought and enriched with the manifold gifts which the genius of other peoples have brought to this common shore. Out of Europe and out of Asia and out of Africa they have come, men of many races and many complexions, and the future of America is in their hands.

Give-and-take

It is not for all men easily to understand this truth; it is not for all readily to perceive that there must be give as well as take in the intimate process of achieving a national concord. Many there are of the native-born who look upon the newcomers as welcome only in so far as they are willing to forget the habits of their fathers and relinquish the customs of their Old-World past; and some there are of those newly come who have failed to discern that the life here opening is a new life, calling for the abandonment of modes and manners that will not bear transplanting without becoming tawdry and meaningless. But time is a potent teacher; and I cannot believe that any man who will seriously think what shall be the Americanism of a thousand years from now can for a moment doubt that long ere then the discord and disorder which at present beset us will have disappeared and the racial and cultural antagonisms of this hour will have been brought to one design, harmonious through all its contrasts. The in-

vention of this design is the labor of our present lives.

Acculturation

I have spoken of the world problem and I have spoken of the American problem, which is like it in character, but lesser in scale and nearer to our lives. I would now speak, with a special illustration, of the mode of union and the meaning of acculturation of peoples within peoples. We come here, into America, like a procession of householders wending its way with gifts of the first fruits, each race and people with an offering unto the future. How shall the gifts be received? How shall the festival be ordered? What shall be the price and what the blessing?

The Hebrew an example

When I consider, apart from circumstance, what should be the most perfect example of a people and a culture which have shown the power of give and take, of combination and assimilation without loss of self-identity, I can give but one unreserved answer—the Hebrew. Here, in the accomplished past, we have the portrayal of such qualities as are demanded for the salvation of the future; here, in race and in idea, we have the illustration of such powers of union as are demanded of all the races of America in the secure founding of their mutual destiny. Review for a moment the astonishing history of Israel. The first mention of the nation on a profane monument is a boast of their destruction on a stela of the Pharaoh Merneptah, erected about 1223 B.C.—"Israel is desolated; its seed is destroyed." Doubtless the words commemorate no more than a local massacre or the defeat of a band of pioneer warriors from

First mention of Israel

among the Israelitic tribes already hovering near the Promised Land from beyond the Jordan and abiding only the waning of the power of Egypt to enter into its possession. But viewed in the long perspective of history, it is surely intensely dramatic that the first mention of the most imperishing of peoples should be the vaunt of its total destruction. For more than a millennium after the time of Merneptah, Israel was to occupy the land in which he first had encountered her, her brief period of security and kingly glory followed by centuries of terrible national anxiety under the constant threat of the great and rapacious empires by which she was surrounded. Egypt to the south, Assyria to the north, Babylon to the east, Rome to the west, turn by turn they wielded the rod of the oppressor; and wars and subjugations, destructions and captivities tore at the vitals of the nation's life until she was become as a living and perpetual sacrifice among men,—

Dramatic history

> . . . . the great Exemplar,
> She that was ground unremittingly
> Betwixt the upper and the nether mill,—
> In dreadful alternation bent
> Beneath the supple claws
> Of the lithe Egyptian, or stricken down
> By the muscled bull, Assyria,—
> Zion, builded on an hill!

It is with ever undiminishing admiration that I have gone time after time to the Boston Public Library to contemplate the great lunette—for as a work of art it surely is of the great—with which Sargent has surmounted his superb frieze of the Prophets of the Old Dispensation.

Sargent's murals

In this lunette, as it seems to me, he has concentrated the essence and symbolized the enduring meaning of the history of the cradle of human civilization, the ancient Orient. On the one side he portrays the Egyptian Pharaoh, active, powerful, pitiless, with his weighted axe uplifted for the cleaving blow, advancing before his animal gods, and all the tokens of Nilotic splendor; on the other, is the gorgeous and heavy and cruel Assyrian, he also attended by his beast-gods and monster-gods, and he also with broad blade upraised to strike. The greatness of the material world is in these two figures, in all its arrogance and ferocity, in all its ruthless and fantastic selfishness. Between them, in the image, is the naked and suppliant form of a Son of Israel, surrounded by his bowed and helpless people, uplifting his empty hands toward that fire of the wings of Cherubim from whence Jehovah reaches to stay with his touch the threatened blows.

Egypt and Assyria

Jehovah

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help.

My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth,

He will not suffer my foot to be moved: he that keepeth thee will not slumber.

Behold, he that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.

The Lord is thy keeper: the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.

The sun shall not smite thee by day, nor the moon by night.

The Lord shall preserve thee from evil: he shall preserve thy soul.

The Lord shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in from this time forth, and even for evermore.

Surely this psalm was in the artist's thought when he penciled his design, memorable with the truth of ages. Today Egypt is no more, Assyria is no more, Babylon and Rome are no more, but she whom they deemed to have broken, Israel, is still a miracle of life among the nations.

The Jew

In all human annals I know of nothing comparable to Jewish history. There is not only the great fact of that millennium of troubled national existence in antiquity, of which I have just spoken; there is also the yet more remarkable fact of two millennia of a not less afflicted dispersion during which the Jew has maintained his race, maintained his religion, maintained his peculiar culture in the midst of divers and far-separated peoples. He has done this in the face of a constant, often violent, and nearly unanimous hostility; and he has done it in a manner to command the respect of all men. He has done it, moreover, in a fashion to read a lesson for the future of mankind; for if there is today on earth a man who is both intensely individual and broadly cosmopolite, it is the Jew. He, more than any other man, has discovered the secret of accommodation to the usages of fellow men without imitation of them, of co-operation without identification, of harmonization without mere unison. He lives in Rome, and is not as the Romans; he is in Asia, in Europe, in Africa, and is not Asian nor European nor African, but is everywhere a kindred apart, related to all men, but confused with none,—such a man, in short, as in the millennial day of the world's full civilization men of all races must become.

Cosmopolitan, yet individual

Such is the spectacle, the miracle, which the Jew presents in human history. And where is the source and secret of this amazing vitality? To seek it in any material thing were to make jest with reason. The jewelled magnificence of Solomon was but a passing dream; the gold and silver vessels of the ancient temple are long-lost baubles. In olden days material wealth and power lay with the empires of the river valleys and the sovrans of the seas—all long vanished away. It is not through material things that men preserve their lives, and no lesson of this truth is more vivid than the lesson of Judah. Rather, the power to live is found through an inner trust and an inward consecration such as all Hebrew history attests. Our treasure out of antiquity is neither in corn nor gold nor public works, but in the records of human experience and the reflections of human conduct as art and literature portray them. Our inheritance out of the past, as our heritage unto the future, is, and can only be, of a spiritual, and not of a material substance.

Source of his vitality

Did any people apprehend this before the Hebrew? Has any held to it with a more tenacious conviction? Assuredly it is present in the legends of the covenants with the patriarchs; it is in the farewell exhortation of Joshua and in the exordium of the Books of Judges; it is in the hero tales, Moses, David, the Maccabees; and above all it is the soul and inspiration of the books of the Prophets. "While philosophy had for the Jews no meaning," says Professor Butcher, "history had a deeper meaning than it

Israel's inheritance

bore to any other people." And he adds: "Nor was the history of their past merely a possession of their own; it was a treasure they held in trust for the human race." And these words come very near to the quick of that vitality which has made Israel unique among peoples. From their earliest records onward the Israelitic families have been history-conscious; they have felt the breadth and endurance of human destiny; they have perceived that the movement of man's life is not one of simple change, but a movement with dramatic episodes and climaxes and with a meaning that lives behind and beyond its scenic shifts; and they have given, to all the Western world, not only their own conviction of the reality of this drama, but the very form in which they themselves have cast it. From the Greeks we of the West derive our arts and our sciences, our politics and our profane letters; but from the Hebrew we derive the whole imaginative frame within which human life is conceived and through which spiritual truth is made vivid and moving. Israel has been gifted with a conception not only vast enough to preserve them living throughout the centuries, but in its strength sufficient to command and engross the imagination of half the world of men. Nor can such a feat be due to any other accident than truth itself, that truth of human nature which, whether through philosophy or science, art or religion, comes at the last invariably to an expression in which the world of fact resolves into an apocalypse and the foundations of life are discovered to stand in its prophecies.

Sense of history

Imaginative frame of life

Here we have before us a truly tremendous illustration, not only of how spiritual forces can act to preserve a nation through unparalleled trials, but even more of how the thought of one people may become the life of many.

III

Influence on Christianity

The sense of the significance of history, of the meaning of before and after in human events, of life as a growth with a fruition, marks the body of ancient Hebrew literature with a singular unity, like the stamp of a single seal; it touches the sacred writings not merely as the atmosphere of a tradition, but as the genius of a people and as a philosophy of the world. It is not extraordinary, it was indeed inevitable, that such a conception, recorded in the thought and, as it were, expounded in the dramatic facts of Israelitic history, should have laid hold profoundly upon the imaginations of the peoples who have adopted the Hebrew writings as in part their own Dispensation. The course of Christian civilization is deeply guided by this same sense of teleology, this same demand for cosmic drama as the background of life, which permeates the Hebrew Scriptures. It is doubtful if any one other conception has so constantly and variously entered into the formation of our culture. If anywhere we are to seek for the manifestation of acculturation, it is here.

Pilgrim Fathers

One need not go beyond our American history for the obvious illustration. Three hundred years ago the Pilgrim colonists of Massachusetts were contemplating their westward voyage; the

range of their ideas would have been utterly simple had they not possessed one inestimable record of human experience, the Bible. This book formed their minds and dominated their characters; its conceptions were their conceptions; and any reader of Governor Bradford's moving journal will perceive at once that the key to the whole enterprise was a conviction of the sanctity of covenants and belief in a Providential guidance through the wilderness into a Promised Land. Not less striking as an example, as it was not less arduous as an undertaking, was the migration of the Mormons, in the last century, into the deserts of the West. Here again the intellectual and moral foundations for a truly impressive achievement in statecraft were inspired primarily by the Old Testament writings; and fantastic as some phases of Mormonism are, as a whole the movement stands forth as a notable instance of the capacity of men to be moved to great hazards and high action by the ideals of another race remote in land and time. Nor is it only such religious groups as the Pilgrims and the Mormons that have been moved by these ideals. Take the messages of the Presidents of the United States, especially those which have been composed upon occasions of great public moment, and there will be found throughout them, running like a clear course, this same simple yet austere confidence in the justifications of history, not for the United States alone, but for the United States as a participant and a maker in the whole movement of Earth's nations.

Bradford's Journal

Mormons

Messages of the Presidents

Hebrew literature and Western civilization

I do not, of course, mean to say that no nation apart from the influence of Hebrew tradition has felt, or would feel, the significance of history: that were notably false. But I do assert that no great literature is so penetrated and so toned by such a conception as is the Hebrew, and I also say, what is patent truth, that it is just in its Hebraic tone that this conception has been assimilated into Occidental civilization, and I think in an especial degree into democratic civilization. It is a commonplace of the history of our culture that the roots of what are highest in it are two, an Hebraic and an Hellenic. From one and the other of these we derive most of the conceptions by which we order our lives. In many particulars there are contrasts between the two types of heritage, but there are also not a few striking parallels and in certain cases at least there are subtle amalgamations of elements derived from each.

Hebrew and Greek

I have in mind certain ideas that move very deeply in our institutions and in our modes of thought,—so deeply that they may indeed be termed forms of conduct. The idea of Law is one of these; and the idea of Justice, which is both the motive and the measure of law; and a third is the idea of Wisdom, as the ordinator of life; and a fourth is the idea of Providence. Each of these ideas is pillar-like in the edifice of our civilization, and all of them, in the forms which they bear, derive from both the Greek and the Hebrew sources. They are complex as great ideas always are, and in a particular sense they are complex of their double origin, through

which, if they are to be understood in their full bearing on our lives, it is most instructive that they be seen.

The Law

Consider the first of these, the idea of Law. Both peoples, Greek and Hebrew, were intensely conscious of this, and each possessed a variety of terms by which to characterize it: for the Greek, law was *νόμος*, a thing apportioned, *θεσμός* or *θέμις*, a thing established, *δίκη*, a custom-sanctioned right, or it was a decree (*ψήφισμα*) or enactment of the people; for the Hebrew, it was *torah,* a direction, *mishpat,* a judgment, or it was a testimony, a precept, a thing engraven, a commandment. Both groups of expression rest upon similar backgrounds of experience, and yet, even in the nomenclatures, there is always some hint of the cleft-like divergence of the final conceptions. For the Greek thought leans, as the terms themselves indicate, toward the structural, the constitutive aspect of law; hence towards its objective source and measures. "All human laws are fed by one law, the law divine," says Heraclitus, "which prevails over all, and suffices for all, and surpasses all"; and herein, at its beginning, he expresses the spirit of that Greek philosophy whose great quest was the discovery and contemplation of the laws of nature, not that man might dream of their alteration but that he might compose his soul in conformity with them. The Hebrew conception, on the other hand, has in it throughout something of that sense of moral peril—fear lest the law be broken, fear lest nature veer man from rectitude—which is symbolized in the image of

Moses when with anger he waxed hot and cast the tables out of his hand and brake them beneath the mount. There is a radical difference between law as the formulation of custom, ours or nature's, and law as the instrument and expression of a good to which men but precariously hold; and it is this difference which separates the Hellenic and the Hebrew, the scientific and the moral elements in our own conception of the ordering of life. Nor need I point out that priceless as is the ideal of form and structure which the Greeks have given us, it could be but empty and monstrous were it uncorrected by the not less priceless insight into man's moral responsibility which is the rock upon which Hebrew culture is built.

Justice

The conceptions of Justice and Wisdom show the same type of divergence, as between the two peoples. At its height, in Plato, Justice was for the Greek a harmony of the virtues, an inward comportment, almost a bearing, an attitude; for the Hebrew it was an emergence from trial, a justification, the triumphant righteousness of a man passed through burnings, like the three brethren of Daniel. The active, the dramatic element is felt to be essential; there must be a moral revelation; there must be an agony and a theophany: and the ancient books abound in the illustration of how a man must wrestle with angels, of how he must grind the mill of strangers, of how he must be proven by famine and by pest, that his salvation may be secure. Similarly, of Wisdom. Aristotle, with his meticulous classifications, sets in series art (τέχνη), science

Wisdom

(ἐπιστήμη), prudence (φρόνησις), wisdom (σοφία), and rational intuition (νοῦς); and with Greek inevitability, he finds essential Wisdom to lie in the union of science and intuitive reason within a sphere which is in fact contemplative, and not active. In contrast the Hebrew conception of Wisdom—again dramatic—is a combination of practical sagacity and of wistful faith. The practical sagacity is witnessed in the wisdom of Solomon, in his traditional judgments, in the proverbs and maxims which bear his name; the faith, at times rising into a veritable passion for illumination, is source of most that makes sublime the Books of the Prophets and the Psalms of the Temple service.

Prometheus and Job

All of these conceptions—Law, Justice, Wisdom,—are colored by the fourth, that of Providence. The similarities and contrasts of *Prometheus Bound* and the *Book of Job* have fascinated many minds and have been many times expounded. Nevertheless, I do not think the subject yet exhausted; and in particular the comparison affords an enlightening insight into the essential bearings of the idea of Providence. The name Prometheus, like the word Providence, means foresight; but the foresight of the Titan is distinctively an inactive and indeed helpless contemplation of the inevitable course of Nature. Prometheus draws a proud, if bitter consolation, from his apprehension of *Ananke*—Necessity, those eternal and inevitable laws of nature from whose operation not Zeus himself can escape; his sufferings are bearable, not because he looks forward either to vengeance or vindication, but

because he knows that in the roll of centuries injustice shall find its balance, and with ageing Time the scales weigh even. The whole tragedy impresses one as if it were but an enlargement of that strange saying accredited to Anaximander, "all things shall make reparation to one another for their injustices, according to the ordinances of Time." Contrast with Prometheus, Job. Here is no clear-sighted knowledge of Destiny. Further, at the last as at the first the smitten and tried patriarch is ignorant of all save the greatness of the power that encompasses him—of this, and of the great fact, fundamental for him, that somehow he can trust this power. Prometheus is silent at the first, self-sufficient throughout, and hopeless everywhere. Job is silent at the last, self-sufficient nowhere, and never utterly despairing. And the reason is that Prometheus has his eyes fixed upon high and indifferent fates; Job, with the men of his race, can conceive of no allotment unaccompanied by a divine solicitude. Over against the saying of Anaximander I would set that of Ecclesiastes which, if I interpret it aright, goes to the heart of the Hebrew conception of the ways of Providence: "He hath made everything beautiful in its time: also he hath set the world in their heart, so that no man can find out the work that God maketh from the beginning to the end." This is the denial of all Promethean knowledge; it is also the assertion of the great article of faith, that all things become beautiful in their season, and that all are the handiwork of a Maker who is likewise a caretaker.

Anaximander

Ecclesiastes

Is it not evident, in all that I have shown, that the characteristic color in all of these ideas—fundamental to Greek, fundamental to Hebrew, fundamental to Americans of today—is given to their Hebraic form by that very concern for what is significant in history, for what is dramatic and moving in human life, which has seemed to us the core of the Hebrew genius? And is it not evident again that these conceptions, of Law and Justice and Wisdom and Providence, with which are interbound the whole group of conceptions which we call the hope of human progress, get their moving, their activistic as distinct from their contemplative values, from the Hebraic root? If so, assuredly I can point to no matter in which we of the United States are today more deeply indebted, to none in which our civic inheritance is more essentially seated, than to this very activism of our political ideals, resting upon faith that the Providence of this world deals fairly with us, leads us even in the darkness of our own knowledge, and holds us to the conviction that Law and Justice and Wisdom are to be passionately sought and maintained, even at the peril of our souls.

Hebraism activistic

Further, I have this to assert. In the United States today and in all Western civilization, there is a terrible tendency of the educated classes to lapse into a weak Hellenism, into *laissez-faire* in the moral and political life, evading responsibility, abjuring faith in any essential righteousness. Materialism, cynicism, a vague and sentimental æstheticism, socialism without

Laissez-faire Hellenism

heart, rationalism unwarmed, these are the commoner forms of the disease. For disease it is, and should it eat to the center of our national life, it would surely destroy all therein that makes us worth preserving. As yet, I believe, the great body of our citizens live in the wisdom of the Jews, not of the Greeks; and that they do this with a true instinct for life is hugely lessoned by history itself; for the Hellenes of old are long passed from this earth, while the Jews still live, an example unto all men of the vital power of ideals to preserve a people. Nor from the America of today nor the America of the future can we afford, for an instant, to relinquish that gift of faith which we owe to them —and which to us as to them is a source of confidence and of life.

America's choice

IV

There is yet a final gift of Hebrew culture of which I would speak. One of the series of the Sargent paintings in the Boston Public Library, to which I have already alluded, is entitled "The Messianic Era." In artistic spirit, as in theme, it is utterly different from the grandiose lunette which depicts the afflictors of Israel: in place of a troubled and barbaric pomp, it portrays the serenity of hope, and the whole composition is toned by an atmosphere of grace and charm and of humane delicacy. On either side the doors of the future are being drawn by obedient wardens, while between them, festooned by the golden wealth of the vine, enters the Messiah, exalted, leading his people into the New Eden. The

Sargent's *Messianic Era*

wonderful blue of the background, the rich golds of the vine, give a color that is splendid without ostentation, altogether befitting the buoyant beauty of the high conception.

The completed drama

This picture, to my eye, is the appropriate complement of the other, not only in artistic spirit, but in the range and reach of its suggestion. For history, which recounts the past, is never truly composed unless it also lives on into the future; and a race gifted with a sense of the significance of the past must be thereby a race gifted with hope of the eras that are to come. I have said that history is a dramatic thing; and this is so not merely because our historical imaginations inveterately dramatize, but because—as the story of Israel itself attests—the facts of human life and of all life are by nature dramatic; nay, if I may play upon the sentence which Plutarch ascribes to Plato, because God always dramatizes! It is not geometry, it is epic and tragic sublimity that at the last give us the image of divine thought. This Israel saw, and in conception it completed the vast drama which begins with Eden and the Fall and moves episodically through the great historical agonies, by a final vision, a theophany clear and luminous in the engloried morning of the Messianic Era.

Zion

All peoples have their idealisms, and many men have found their spiritual inheritance in a lost Paradise or a Utopian commonwealth; yet of them all, has another matched Zion? The vision of an Anointed King returning to the Holy Mount, of a renewed and purified Temple,

of an untroubled possession of a Land of Promise, and of an empire imposed not by the sword but by the spirit of the Law, such a vision is surely no mere flush of the fantasy; rather it springs from the very fountains of desire, where human desire is purest, and from instincts which are more in the nature of graces and intuitions than of helpless dream. It is through such vision that we declare our shortcomings and set our measures, and it is in emulation of such vision that we uprear the pillars of our nobler humanity. Man, even in the moment of his apocalypse, stands with feet to earth, but his eyes are on the stars.

Zionism geographic and ideal

Zionism, as the Messianic Hope, as an everlasting inspiration, seems to me most beautiful, the true splendor of the crown of Judah. Of its other, more practical, phase, as a re-settlement of the ancient domain, I do not conceive myself qualified to speak more than tentatively. I can see that for Jews in lands where Jews still eat their bread in bitterness a new Palestinian Zion may come as a bright redemption; and I can understand that this reason alone might fully justify the material effort. But for the spiritual gift, and the true greatness of Judaism, I do not conceive that the physical restoration can be helpful. Long since Judaism has outpassed the confines of a narrow geography, as long since, even in the days of the later prophets, it had outpassed the narrower confines of race. It has become a force of the human spirit, and therein it has entered into the realm of things intemporal. Here in America we desperately need the

America's need

fervor of the idealism of every race and group that takes up our citizenship; and as an American I could not but feel dimly envious of any other of earth's lands which should draw hence the spiritual allegiance of my fellow citizens; but of that Zion which should be open to all men and should be the illumination of all states, no man need be envious. Plato was wiser than his own Hellenism when he made Socrates say of the ideal city: "In heaven there is laid up a pattern of it, methinks; which he who desires may behold, and beholding, may set his own house in order; but whether such a one exists, or ever will exist in fact, is no matter; for he will live after the manner of that city, having nothing to do with any other." In the end the greatness of all human vision, like the completed significance of history, is to be sought and found "under the form of eternity."

I have here used the famous phrase of a Jew who, disowned in his own day, is proudly recognized today both for beauty of character and power of intelligence by both Jew and Christian. Spinoza, simply human in his life as citizen, was in soul nobly detached from the morass of false conceit into which engrossed men pitifully fall. He beheld life with a great, white sanity; and loving freedom with the passion of one who could perceive the full degradation of enslavement, he pointed the way to it, through the quiet of the intelligence, into the realm of ideas, under the form of eternity. Like a Messiah he opened the gates to the ample serenity of the morning, and he made himself

Spinoza

king in a transcendent kingdom. Spinoza was no Jew in the olden tradition; he was no Christian; but he was a noble and a great citizen of the modern world, bearing thereto a treasure which it was his to discover because he had been a Jew and had shared in the inheritance of Israel. And therein he figured what the Jew might mean, as a man of his kind among mankind.

I would make one last comparison, and beside Spinoza I would set the figure of that great Englishman, his contemporary, who was also a lover of freedom, and who, after a high participation in the activities of the state, spent his greatest years in austere seclusion. John Milton was splendid as an English citizen; he was more splendid as an English poet, and as a poet he was more than of his nation. There is no other writer of Christendom whose imagination is so shot through with the sublimities of the Hebrew Scriptures as is Milton's, and none other who may so truly be described as a spiritual son of Israel. Not only in *Paradise Lost,* with its vastly cosmic drama, but also in the gravely noble *Samson Agonistes,* Milton moves in thought with the Hebrew poets and prophets, and as one of their number. Like Spinoza he sought spiritual freedom; like Spinoza he beheld it under the form of eternity; but the manner of his expression is more apocalyptic, more Jewish than is Spinoza's,—as if, in a division of inheritance, these two men of genius, Jew and Christian, had each come to mastery of the other's speech.

John Milton

Is it not through such spiritual transmissions that we men shall come at last into the reality of

The final Zion

our Messianic hope? Into that final Zion whose temple precincts shall be the habitable globe, its courts Earth's nations, and its choirs the antiphonies of languages not uttered as shibboleths but as the diapason of all fine ideals? Whether such an one will ever exist in fact is no matter, for he who hath beheld it will live after the manner of that city, having nothing to do with any other.

V

Philosophy and the Jews

In a preceding paragraph I quoted with approval Professor Butcher's judgment that "while philosophy had for the Jews no meaning, history had a deeper meaning than it bore to any other people." Now I would go forward to what seems to me to be an important modification of this judgment. In a fine traditional sense it is assuredly true that philosophy is a creation of the Greek, and its historic course has been overlorded by the Greek intelligence. It was the Greeks who laid the foundations of all those sciences by which we can explain, in a sense, how such a world as ours is possible; but not Greek science, and no abstract science or philosophy, can explain why our world is just this world from among all that are possible. For such an explanation a differing philosophic mode, a teleological, a dramatic mode is alone capable; and such a mode is that in which Hebrew thought is couched; while from the Hebrew it has passed into the center and has set the horizons of Occidental culture. The sense

of history is indeed its midmost chord, but history is itself a thing vastly philosophic.

Greek thought spatial, Hebrew temporal

Two images lie at the core of all explanatory representation—the image of extension in Space and the image of projection in Time, vitally the image of a man's body and the image of a man's years. In the arts the two correspond, with curious fidelity, to the distinction of the plastic arts from the art of music; and it is surely not without point that our æsthetic inheritance from the Greeks is splendidly spatial, giving us not only our most superb representations of the human body but also the glory of all dimensional shapes, whereas from the Hebrew there is but the one tradition of the harper and the psalm. And even as for the forms of sense and of art there are two moulds, into which their substance is cast, so is it also of our realm of inner reflection. The field of possibility, which is the field of abstract thinking, is charted in multiple dimensions, in morphic figures, in states, forms, analytical planes and cubes, in that vaster geometry which circumscribes all Nature within a sphere. But the course of actuality is linear and undividing; its variety must come from the pageant of phantasmal events which are the historic display of a Truth seated in the fated fact that out of all that might have been there is realized but the one life that is. Such a conception is narrow in its course, but it is intense in its convictions: for it the efficient and final causes are the deeply operative, and the governance of life is heavy with responsibility. Is there aught of marvel in the clear fact that for two thousand years, while

the Greek sciences have been fitfully cultivated in cloister and closet, the polities of men have been governed and dominated by the Hebraic philosophy of history?

First and Last Things

For it is assuredly a philosophy. Cosmogony —Cataclysm—Redemption—Apocalyptic Hope: this is a form of thought, a mode of truth, and though it be at its fountain perchance no more than the projection of a man's days upon the flood of an eternity, none the less it is in such an image that pilgrim humanity must forever set its faith—a pillar of cloud by day, a pillar of fire by night.

XV. APOLOGIA PRO FIDE

I

I AM a member of no church and a participant in no Christian communion; nor have I ever been such. This is perhaps strange in view of the fact that I was reared under Christian influences and that all my traditions are those of what is called the Christian civilization, of which, indeed, I am a student and in an humble way an expositor, for by profession I am a teacher of the history of the philosophy of the western world. Nor have I been insensitive to these influences and traditions. The writings of Patristic and Scholastic churchmen and of the Christian philosophers arouse in me a keen and sympathetic interest; I am deeply stirred by the spectacle which the Hebrew Scriptures present of a whole people struggling through a millennium toward a spiritual, a Messianic revelation; and I am reverent before the nobility of the Gospels. In another mode, I am moved by the outer symbols of Christianity; for I cannot raise my eyes to the image of a saint or view depictions of the passion of Christ without a quickened heart, while even such unadorned tokens as the palm or the cross or the sight of a Gothic spire command from me an instinctive genuflection of the spirit. I have attended many forms of Christian service, and in all of them, from the most formal and ritualistic to the simplest, I

De vita sua

have found in myself a sense of propriety of presence, of fellowship if you will, utterly different from the aloof curiosity with which I have observed the rites of Brahmans or of Chinese joss priests. Nay, brought though I have been to something like devotion to the art and the philosophy of the classical Hellene, I know, and am content to know, that there is an untraversable abyss between the Greek and the Christian conceptions of life, and that this Western paganism, intimate as it is in our culture, is, like the paganisms of the East, forever foreign to my spirit. In some undefined sense, although I am no churchman, I am a Christian; and it is, after all, not surprising that, from time to time, I have wavered, considering whether the reasons which have held me from formally uniting with some Christian sect are sufficient.

A symbolic dream

Those reasons seem to me to be symbolized, in a way, by a very early and vivid dream. My mother died in my fourth year, and the dream was born of the impression which her death made upon me. In it, I seemed to be leaning upon her knee as she sat in a camp-chair in a secluded corner of a field, and I looked up into her face while she taught me; and then, of a sudden, the chair was empty and there was a grave-mound beside me, and my heart was desolate with fear; whereupon, my father and my brothers and sisters came to lead me away, and we walked toward a bridge, which they passed over, summoning me to follow; but for me the bridge was impassable; I was drawn backward, desperately, toward the new-made grave, and I

stood alone, on the hither side, paralyzed and in tears. As an infant I had been baptized by devout parents. My father was a clergyman, and, as I came to recognize, a man of uncommon goodness, whose life was in consonance with his profession of faith; and the foster-mother who came to take my mother's place, was a woman of rare piety and devotion and understanding: the influences of example in my own home were all conducive to respect for the religion of my elders. Nor was there wanting instruction; my mind was early filled with Biblical images (for which, today, I am most grateful); as a child I had visions of angels, I saw the foot and chariot of Elijah in the fires of heaven, I shuddered at the torments of martyrs, and I figured to myself the awesomeness of the great Judgment; inerly, too, I was abashed at the thought of the all-seeing eye of God, which could pierce to my remotest wish. But I was not given to confidences in such matters. For no reason which I can yet understand, I had, always, something of that same feeling of desolation and isolation which marked the dream that followed my mother's death; and, although I said my prayers as I was taught, I remember that when by myself I prayed, it was to the angel of my mother, for I quite believed her to be near.

Christian nurture

One phase of my early training is of importance as affecting my later attitude toward church affiliation. The church which my father served rests its interpretation of Christianity upon belief in an experience of conversion which is in the nature of an intense and inner illumination,

Theory of conversion

sudden and indubitable, and indeed almost convulsive as a change of life. Already in early childhood, I was given to look forward to the time when this change might come into my own life and I pass into the fold of the consciously saved, and was given, therefore, to feel that there existed an imperative distinction between the true Christian and such a groper after light as I must be. In a way I resented this idea; nevertheless, under its influence, when I was thirteen or thereabouts, I made the great essay, seeking salvation, as it was called; and I prayed to God, especially for the conviction of sin which I did not truly feel and which I had been told must come first; and then to Christ Jesus, because he had been a suffering man; but most and most passionately to the spirit of my mother. Yet out of it all there came no illumination, no strange and perfervid inner glory such as others about me testified to; and I went from the altar of the close and crowded church, out into the winter starlight, filled with sadness and chagrin and the resentful feeling that I had been fooled. So far as I can recollect that is the last time that I have uttered a word of prayer, and I never went onward to membership in the church. Possibly, had I been reared in a more formal and less exacting mode of the faith, I should have become a church-member naturally and without ado. As it was, this experience emphasized for many years my reclusiveness in religious matters; and I made no confidants of my parents.

"Seeking Salvation"

Psychologists, I am well aware, give glib explanations of such experiences as I have narrated

—explanations which impress me as idle and without penetration,—and they would nod sage assents were I to go forward, biographically, through a youth of curious inquiry and of facile scepticisms into a maturity of objective study and cautious reservation: it would all stand out as a case, not exceptional, but typical of the modern man, and subject to recognized formulæ. For myself, I care nothing for the formulæ, being confident that I have tested the flimsiness of their tissues; but in the other fact, that my case is a typical one, human and modern, I find significance. For the question of the Church is a social question of great magnitude; and it is worth the while of men, both within and without it, to ask its meaning in our civilization: to ask how or whether it should be preserved, and how or whether or in what sense our civilization shall continue to be Christian. The answers to such questions must come ultimately from the experiences and reflections of individuals, and in particular, I suppose, from an examination of the considerations which hold men who, while yet they are in Christendom, are outside the pale of the church.

Psychological explanations

The foundations of my own attitude lie in those experiences of childhood which I have indicated; but maturing years have brought forward other considerations and have given the old a new definition. I have discovered, of course, that the modes of Christian conformity are various, and that both in rite and doctrine the religion is given many interpretations. Indeed, the forms and latitudes of the church are

Reflections of maturity

so many that it would seem that no man need be solitary in matters of faith. Nevertheless, there are qualms and restraints (differing with men) which act as effective brakes even upon those who believe, as I do, that Christianity is so intrinsic in our civilization that to permit it to pass would mean cultural, nay, spiritual suicide. The problem is not a light one, even when the affairs of this world alone are in regard; and it is but a superficial mind that can fail to perceive that the relation of church and state—each institution in its fuller sense—presents a problem which the peoples of the West have not yet solved, nor in fact profoundly considered.

False positions

Such issues give significance to individual experiences, and before all to the reflective attitudes which hold men, not thoughtlessly, outside the church. And here, to revert, I come to my own deterrent difficulty, which is not, I imagine, remote from what is the underlying motive of many another churchless man. It is related to matters of the intellect, but it is by no means solely intellectual; for it is in the nature of a fear, the fear of being put by church-membership into a false position—false before others outside the church, false before those within the church, false to myself. This falsity should not follow from any conscious untruth on my part, but rather from the expectations and understanding which a formal entering into the church would arouse in others, from the fact that churches are, after all, social institutions, with established interpretations too familiar in men's minds to be easily modified: the entering into a

church is, as a fact, a profession of faith, and a profession for which there is a conventional and unevadable reading. And this could easily make the whole act an intolerable falsification in each of the three directions I have indicated. For, to consider first those who are outside the church with whom I come in contact, how should I appear to the inquisitive and sceptical youth (children of the hour) who come to my lectures? I am a teacher, and a teacher of philosophy, and my whole power must depend upon independence and sincerity of thought. As a non-church-member I can speak to those who are not in the church without raising any presumption of bias or *parti-pris*. But were I known to be of this congregation or that, the case would be quite different: "He is a conformist," the youth would say, "and must cover the truth in the interests of his confession." And influence would slip from me. Again, of those who are within the church: my understanding of the faith is not that of the laity nor is my mode of expression that of the clergy; as a student of philosophy and of history, I cannot accept religion as unanalyzed impression nor as uncriticized tradition, nor can I accommodate myself to the veiled language of parable. Perhaps many a layman and many a cleric would think as I do in regard to the meaning of the Christian religion were we to arrive at common speech, but the great mass of the laity would judge me by standards which I could never endure and few indeed of the clergy care to conquer the philosophical mode of speech: their own is the differing tradi-

The power of the teacher

tion of emotion. These are falsities with respect to other men which would veritably destroy in me the profession of philosophy, though this is perchance no great thing in itself. But beyond there is the third falsification, to myself. For while I am now square with myself and unafraid before God in the profession of my belief, how can I be certain that, having adopted old and double-meaning creeds, even outwardly, I should be able to maintain myself in unchanging devotion to the truth? There are many matters, touching religion, concerning which I well know there are perplexities and reservations in my mind; some day these may force themselves insistently into my life; and on such a day, can I be even-eyed to the truth if I have already committed my mouth to words and forms? Had I, like Descartes, been reared in a church which lays its first stress upon an outward submission and not upon an inward conversion, I might indeed have adopted his admirable rule of conformity until the period of doubt were passed; but I have not been so reared, and have not, therefore, first found myself within the fold of a church from which no man would for any light reason depart.

Inward falsification

Here, then, is the great deterrent which holds me from the church; for no man can conceive that his soul's salvation or the welfare of others can be furthered by any form of public lie or self-deceit. But why, one may ask, need there be this difference of interpretation? Or what value do you find in Christianity which makes you loth to give up the name, and yet unwilling

Church and creed

to adhere to its ecclesiastical creeds? The question is, after all, the central one, to which the whole matter of the church is secondary. Is the Christian religion true in a sense which modern men may understand and value? And to this, in answer, I can but proffer my own understanding of the faith.

II

Christian dualism

At the core of the Christian religion there is a dogma—voiced in no creed, so far as I am aware, —which cuts deep to the truth of human nature. It is the dogma of the antithesis and struggle of the flesh and the spirit, of the World and the Word, the dogma of the suffering and striving man, which is nowhere so vividly expressed as in the terrible image of St. Paul, *ἐμοὶ κόσμος ἐσταύρωται, κἀγὼ τῷ κόσμῳ*—"the world is crucified unto me and I unto the world." Out of this dogma have come the sharp-limned dualisms of Christian conception: corruption and incorruption, body and soul, salvation and damnation, Paradise and Hell, God and the Devil, two Ways, a narrow and a broad, and there where they part an inexorable Judgment; and out of it, in exhortation and practice, have come the disciplines, asceticisms, martyrdoms of the body, castigations of the soul, which have made of Christianity preeminently a religion of the will. Rebirth and Resurrection, and *death* of the carnal that a man may be reborn into the spiritual, and *death* of the physical in order that a man may find resurrection into Life—these express the grimness and relentlessness of a faith which demands utter

destruction of the objects of its hostility, even though a man rend the flesh of his body and cast away its living members. Greek morals demanded of a man temperance, self-mastery, self-restraint; but Christian salvation demands of him self-conquest and in part self-annihilation. It is a religion without compromise, a religion of war, and this is why its terrene church is a Church Militant and its supernal church a Church Triumphant.

Moral realities

This, I say, cuts deep to the truth of human nature, and deep to the truth of the world. First, and most profoundly, it is a moral fact; there is no toying with the forms of desire; there is no equivocacy in the qualities of the virtues; there are no indulgences, and absolution follows only on relinquishment; good is shining and intense, and evil is black and redemptionless. There is, I know, a monistic turn to theology, which would exorcise evil with delicate phrases and save the face of the Devil in seeking to justify God; but such theology runs, I firmly believe, counter to the whole grain of the faith; the Christian religion is not monistic, it is dualistic, and its dualism is that of a relentless and eternal war. It is just such a war as every man knows in his own soul; life is unrelaxing choice, and choice is of good and evil: complexion this fact as you may, its features are fixed; and it is for this reason that I should say, with Pascal, that Christianity is true to human nature, and therefore worthy of respect.

There is a theological difficulty connected with this moral aspect of Christian dualism

Theological difficulty

which the orthodox theologians have never satisfactorily solved; but it is not, first of all, with this aspect that I am concerned, but with another, an intellectual phase of the dualism which is in a way of more importance, since it touches more nearly the main current of modern scepticism and the moving dubieties of the modern man. For there is no doubt that the whole Renaissance culture of Europe, within which our lives are cast, has produced an intellectual conceit (the thing which the Eighteenth Century called Reason) that of itself makes the recognition of Christian truth difficult. We are educated in modes of thinking and in a paraphernalia of science which are far more conducive to doubt than to faith,—or, as I should prefer to put it, which absorb us in the encrustations rather than lead us into the motives of life. I do not mean to say that our culture is irreligious nor non-Christian; the Renaissance is not a Restoration of paganism; the intervention of Christianity made that once for all impossible. But none can deny that the spirit of modernity has clouded the eye of faith; nor that, in particular, the edifices of our sciences—temples of learning and altars of knowledge, as we figure them,—have commanded from many minds all that they have to give of reverence and devotion. As I see it, the whole consequence harks back to a partial and specialized understanding of the meaning of that Reason which we have made into the staff and the support of our lives; for in reason itself there is a dualism, related to the moral dualism upon which Christianity

Renaissance not pagan

rests, whose understanding is the true key to faith—at least, where want of faith is of the intellect.

Scientific scepticism

For what, after all, is the nature of scientific, rationalistic scepticism, save it be a distortion, an hypertrophy of the periphery of life? Religions are man-made, it is said; and the words are uttered as a reproach. But is science any the less man-made? Its numbers are the ten digits of our hands; its measures are our palms and paces. By a vast process of dilation and fission, division and multiplication of its own forms—like the monstrous multiplications of infusorial life—it spawns and spreads about the whole circumference of human interests, and generates a sort of comb, a coralline structure, with its own dead casts for a supporting frame and life only at its ever-perishing surface. Within this colony of bones there are tunnels and cells, paths of no issue, and tortuous courses to the living waters; and our art of life becomes an art of threading the labyrinth and our craft a craft of motion. For though I speak in a figure, it is close indeed to the truth of what science is and of what it pretends to be—a guide to the ordering of our physical migrations to and fro upon the repeating surface of a circumscribed sphere. Our ideas are like frail antennæ with which we explore spaces beyond spaces, yet when we move it is with feet which cling to the soil; and we know that into that soil our most airy mansions will shrink with our decaying bones.

Science in image

I present in an image what analysis will verify.

Mathematical reason

Our mansion of rationalism is built up in a mathematical mode: its bricks are numbers and its apices are formulæ; and the joy we have in it is the childish joy of endlessly assembling and endlessly toppling over our structural fantasies. It has practical values; that is, it guides our wanderings over the surface of this Earth; and indeed, it is more like a map, both in its manner of making and in its uses, than like aught else; for it may show a course, but it cannot reveal the motive of the journey nor the nature of the destination. To understand the latter there must be another form of knowledge and another type of reason, another truth, which, even in the scale of human experience, speaks in other modes. The mathematical, and, as we say, scientific manner of thought, was long ago named the operation of the dividing intellect and its reasonings platted as discursive; but there was also, long ago, name given to the type of reason which embraces both the presuppositions and the after-completion of science, and because it operates through insight and revelation it was called the intuitive reason. And with this, I come again to that central dualism which, as I have said, has an intellectual as well as a moral foundation.

Intuitive reason

Intuitive reason is in no sense remote from our daily life. It is altogether simple and human. In form it might be described as the reason of metaphor, for it is present in every metaphorical expression; the "gift of tongues" is a Scriptural phrase which I think denotes it; and that it is a gift, in some sense an inspira-

tion, is indicated by the fact that it is our poets, masters of metaphor, whom men prize as their wisest. Plato is no doubt the father of the distinction between the two types of reason, as he is master in the use of both,—beyond διάνοια is νόησις, beyond dialectic is θεωρία, insight. It is present also in the great conception of Origen who saw in history not merely a chain of events, to be told link by link; but throughout it a meaning, a Logos, the perception of which is wisdom; and again this distinction is the prime subtlety of Dante, who strives to combine both modes of expression in the great poem which he describes as having a double sense, *per literam* and also *per significata per literam,* the first a literal, the second an allegorical and mystical meaning. So, once more, Pascal: "the heart has its reasons which the reason knoweth not"; there is a light of nature and there is an illumination of faith,—though only the former is human; the latter is the grace of God.

Plato

Origen

Dante

Both Plato and Pascal were eminent in mathematics, masters of the science of their day and competent judges of the significance of science in human thought, not only in their day but in ours also; and it is in words which seem to echo Plato that Pascal lays bare the root of scientific scepticisms: "Our soul is thrown into the body, where it finds number, time, dimensions; it reasons thereon and calls this *Nature, Necessity,* and can believe in nothing else." Number, time, dimensions,—these are the tools of the dividing intellect; these are the measures of our sciences, the projections of our map-makers. But the na-

Pascal

ture which they figure is strangely empty, and it is utterly distorted if it have not a Logos behind the image, a mystical beneath the literal intention. Plato, Origen, Dante, Pascal,—the great thinkers of our race, century by century, have perceived this fact; and they have placed over against the reason of number a reason of metaphor, over against the physical a spiritual reading, an act of faith, without which not number itself can form and combine. These men were judges of the scepticisms of their own day, of which they had taken the measure, and their utterances are judgments upon the scepticisms of our day as well: for in science there is nothing new excepting detail, the measures of it were long since set by our digits and our paces; and in scepticisms there is nothing new. There were sceptics in Corinth who doubted with the same doubts wherewith men doubt now, "In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." It is, of course, no answer to a doubt to say that it is old; but at least this fact should take from it the noise of modernity, and perhaps it should persuade those who are moved by it to examine again the foundations of their convictions, to inquire whether truth may not indeed speak in a double tongue, and whether, in the great dualism of our nature, there may not be intellectual as well as moral insights which must fortify us in the faith.

Metaphorical reason

Corinthian sceptics

III

Moral and rational dualisms one

Now the twin dualisms, the one of which, that of good and evil, salvation and damnation, is moral, while the other, that of discursive and intuitive reason, or, as often put, of reason and faith, is rational, are, as a matter of fact, inseparable. Both are of foundational importance in the Christian religion, and to a single end: for the moral dualism of good and evil is the whole motive of the drama of Redemption: Adam's fall, the passion of Christ, the Last Judgment,—the whole image of Sin and Atonement is the visible working out of the war of God and the Devil; while, in a manner which for the theologians was no less conscious, the conflicts of reason and faith have been the sharpest stripes of Christian discipline. *Credo quia absurdum,* expressing the defiance which faith gives to reason, *Credo ut intelligam,* uttering the humility of reason in the presence of faith, and the wistful ontological surmise, *Dubito . . . ergo Deus est!* —these and their like, ranging from a glad recognition of the miracle of faith to an exalted sense of its power, are the theological expression of men's perception of the twofoldness of their own powers, and of the disciplinary, the moral, meaning of this twofoldness. There is, and the theologians have known it, an obsessing danger, not to the mind alone but to the whole immortal soul, in an undisciplined devotion to things of the intellect; and in faith, which is the disciplinary insight which keeps reason from monstrosity, they have discovered a redemption

Patrist maxims

of mind and soul. It is in this that lies Christian humility (never the servile thing Nietzsche imagined it to be), and it is through this that men escape the blindness of mind inflicted by the god of this world, which is the blindness of their own petty conceits. Christian humility

Now there is a kind of pact, if I may so put it, between the Devil and the discursive reason—or, to speak with phrase less light, to live only with the discursive reason is to abide in a tomb and to live a living death. Science has three dimensions: an historical dimension, whose plausibilities and illusions are those of the cinematograph; a structural dimension, which we call the organization of knowledge; and a practical dimension, represented by the absorptions of sense and appetite. In any one of these a mind may become so engrossed that it will wind itself cocoon-like in cerements of its own weaving, shutting off its vision of the heavens, and perishing as a husk. These are the perils of this world, and the distortions of nature, and the paths that lead to the final obliteration of the earth-bound—for all alike, they perish, and as surely as the sun sets, the time will come when the vanities of our cities and our books, of our numbers and our tales, shall be swept into the night. And that will in truth be a judgment day. The Devil and discursive reason

Herein, I am aware, I touch upon matters that affect not only many who doubt, but many who profess the Christian religion,—nay, herein I come to what I conceive to be the very heart of the true Christian theology, where the orthodox many will not, I know, readily follow me. For The heart of theology

Christian truth and historical verities

to the many the truth of Christianity turns upon the historical verities of the Scriptures, and if a tradition lie or a miracle fail their faith is shattered; whereas to my mode of thinking there is not an episode of the two Testaments which might not be altered or replaced without impugning Christian truth; for to my mode of thinking each of these episodes, and the whole of the two Testaments, and the whole of human history and of the history of this world, and all that is therein of art and science and learning and of material grandeur and of material ruin, in all there is not an episode nor a form that is other than an image with a meaning, a letter in a book. Not the image but the meaning, not the letters but the Logos, are the world's truth, its inner fact and its sole enduring fact.

For consider—what is, what can be the height and depth and length and breadth of this our world if it be not from hour to hour the consummation and generation, death and birth, of its forms? The past *is* not, even so soon as it is named. The past *is* not; it is non-existent; it is nothing; not only irrecoverable, but annihilate.

The world's reality

The reality of the world—and I proclaim all science for my voucher,—the reality of the world *is* just the sum of its possibilities at any instant: in the dead past there are no possibilities; the book is closed and the fates are departed. There is a dream which sometimes comes to us which is a true image of the world's reality. In that dream we are ascending a stair, leading on, on, up into the gloom; behind and below us, as each foot lifts to a new tread, the stair dissolves into

nothingness, and behind us is only void and the abyss; before us, there are a few steps faintly illumined and many vaguely surmised, and no landing that we may guess; but we must climb, onward with all our strength, for the stair, which is the world, is dissolving moment by moment beneath our feet and only in mounting is there life. That dream, I say, is an image of reality, and the little light is the illumination of our science, and the stair surmised is the great act of faith which is the impulse of life and which gives all the meaning it can possess to the little that we know and see.

Allegory of the stair

The world, given us by sense and science, is an allegory, an image, a riddle to be read. Human experience is the act of reading, and the human body is but an instrument of precision, a lens, whose ever-shifting focus is throwing the signs into relief. Plato knew this—most Christian of pagans—and he made it his philosophy. Origen knew it, and he set it forth in his great conception of nature and history as the phantasm of the Logos, which, in turn, is the eternal Son of the eternal Will of God. It is as though the Divine Will were the white light of creation, and the Divine Son the prism whereby this light were broken into the colored and banded manifestation, which is the world; for us knowledge is of two sorts,—to measure the range and intensities of the colored expanses, and this is the labor of science and of history,—and to recompose this outspread illumination into the single pure ray of white light which is its source and essence, and this is the in-

Origen on the Logos

Drama of Redemption

sight of faith and the truth of the revelation. That the light of this revelation is lifted up, like the brazen serpent in the Wilderness, like the Cross of the Atonement, to be a sign of salvation to suffering and tormented souls, groping in darkness, seemed to Origen the great lesson of Scriptural history; but assuredly it is no less the teaching of all history, natural and human. For every historian and every naturalist, consciously or not, casts his story sooner or later into the form of a drama of redemption—the progress of a civilization, the evolution of a race, the crystallization of a nebula into a solar system, the unfolding of a rose. Strife and disaster accompany these processes; they end in dramatic defeats: but like a drama, they are not played for the last act, their meaning is not the last act, nor any act; their meaning is in another dimension and in another than their scenic realm; it is in a moral world, where good and evil are the protagonists, and in a spiritual world whose presence penetrates all nature as the beauty of the sunset penetrates the vapors of the evening skies.

I speak in images, but this world is an image, and there is no other speech. The plain, nay, the shouting fact of human experience is that men believe in and desire goodness and beauty, and feel the dearth of it and grope after it, and hope for light, and pray for redemption. This *is* human nature, and it is also the nature of that world from which human nature is born and within which we men have being. The plain fact *is* an act of faith in things unseen, things hoped for; and this act we call life. It is life;

Nature and Human Nature

and it is also belief in God and yearning for salvation; and therefore I say that Christianity, which has figured forth these truths more profoundly than any other religion, is a true religion and *the* true religion, and a revelation of life unceasing. Wherefore it is that to me the scepticisms born of rationalistic science and rationalized history sound thin and piping, remote and of little consequence.

IV

Life and person of Jesus

The world is an image with a meaning and life is a peril sustained by the hope of an escape; but it would be a mistake to assume that all signs are equally significant or all salvations equally secure. The Christian religion is no mere formula; it is specific; and none should mistake that its central and form-giving fact is the life and person of Jesus Christ. Whether that life is described in the main faithfully by disciples who viewed it with only a partial comprehension, as the simplicity of the Gospels would seem to indicate, or whether, as many moderns judge, it is clouded with legend, is of no material importance; for in any case its essence, its spiritual form, its Idea (in a Platonic mode), stands out with an emphasis which near two millennia have only rendered the more intense. For the life of Jesus is a hinge in human history, as no student of Christendom can fail to perceive; and as time passes, the simple and elemental reasons which make of it the image of our Redemption become but the more unencumbered and clear.

Jesus and common men

Of these reasons doubtless the most obvious is the truly preternatural faith of Jesus in his fellow men, particularly in undistinguished men, the commoners. "No other teacher," remarks Glover, "dreamed that common men could possess a tenth part of the moral grandeur and spiritual power which Jesus elicited from them—chiefly by believing in them. Here, to anyone who will study the period, the sheer originality of Jesus is bewildering." The Greeks had discovered the political form of democracy, but it was a form without the motive which could make democracy live; it was designed for the great-souled man, though even μεγαλοψυχία, from a practical point of view, seemed to them to approach the Quixotic. And Quixotic the Gospel of Christ, addressed not only to the superior among men but also to slaves and women and the weak of this world, certainly appeared to the superb in learning and the magnificent in state of the pagan empires within which it was first proclaimed. And yet, century by century, it has forced its point: first, refuge for the weak, alms to the poor, freedom for the slave; then chivalry, and all that fine devotion to the cause of the helpless and the hapless which, through the spread of Christianity, brought a ray of illumination into the barbarism of the Dark Ages; and finally, under the eaves of our own years, the recognition of the rights, political and economic and human, of all men and women and children, of all humanity, to participation in the great hope of mankind. These things were denied by paganism; these things

Political and spiritual democracy

have been affirmed by Christianity from the day of its founder; and it is the vigor of this affirmation which has put into democracy a spiritual power and a living force.

But it is not merely for its democracy that the faith of Jesus in common men is crucially significant; there is in it a subtler and more psychical import. For it means—and this is close to the inner genius of all Christianity—a rebuke to judgments which are but of the senses and the reason, and an affirmation that man, too, is clothed in an allegorical flesh, and that the passing semblance of life is in no wise its immortal truth. The superb and magnificent of this world —magnificent in raiment, glorious in physique, proud in intellect, Greek gods, Imperatores,— these, if they have not humility, if they have not charity, are the whited sepulchres, death at their core. But in the innocence and hopefulness of childhood there is proportion and beauty; in the burden-upbearing poor there is strength; and in the will of the martyr, through blood and fire, there is nobility and the glory of conquest. Hold up to mankind the mirror of truth, let them see the reflection not of their actor's panoply but of their character, and the outer values writhe and twist as in a flame: what seemed fair shows wizened and shrunken, and what had shown lame and crippled is perceived as a flowering. Men know this true, and they forget it hourly; and perhaps it is this forgetfulness, this habitual drunkenness of the lethal senses, which has emphasized in counterpoise the Christian symbolism of the gruesome, the death's head and all

Rebuke to judgments of sense

Death's aspect

that. "That skull had a tongue in it, and could sing once; how the knave jowls it to the ground, as if it were Cain's jaw-bone, that did the first murder! That might be the pate of a politician, which this ass now o'er-offices, one that would circumvent God. . ." *One that would circumvent God!* — in all Greek tragedy is there a match in irony for this fearful Shakespearian phrase? "Get you to my lady's chamber, and tell her, let her paint an inch thick, to this favor she must come: make her laugh at that." There is an inexorable reality which the Christian religion faces, and faces inflexibly, though it is not the reality of the superficial flesh.

Jesus believed in *men*, not in their appearances; just as his faith in God was in a power not external in nature. This is in part the import of his love of children, his patience with the simple-minded, his sympathy for the halt and blind. But it is more than a humane sympathy as it is more than a democratic faith. For at the bottom it is recognition of the need of salvation and the longing for a savior. Men are imperfect and life is a battle, well-nigh a disaster. The feeble, the crippled, the dim-minded, these do but image our universal human condition in a world wherein contention is bitter and inextinguishable, where suffering and destruction are an unchanging lot, and where the supreme virtue is heroism. And thence we come to the final

The Agony

symbol of the life of Christ, that Agony and Crucifixion which the Church has with inevitable truth made the sign of its faith: Christendom is a Christendom of the Cross, nor can Christen-

dom ever be anything else; for without the sign, the faith passes. To the rational mind there is a hopeless antagonism between the fact of the Passion and the theory of Divinity; but the Scholastics were right, so far as keeping the important thing is concerned, in making theology rigidly submissive to revelation; it is not the *intelligo,* but the *credo* that expresses Christian truth to experience, and in the *credo* the inevadable article is the proclamation of salvation *per viam crucis.*

Per viam crucis

Not that the salvation is found in the fact of suffering: in itself that is meaningless. But it is to be found in the vicariousness of the suffering, in the Atonement, and in the intention of the vicarious gift. That Jesus should have died for his fellow men is in no great way distinctive; there are animals that die for one another, and instincts that call for such vicarious death. But what he died for—and here again we come to what is most deeply and nobly our humanity—is the ideal in human nature, the meaning in human life. His death prolongs no man's physical years, but it has transfigured the significance of the lives of myriads of men; and it has symbolized, infinitely more than any other death, the glory of our human power to surrender the mortality of the flesh for the sake of the immortal pattern of humanity. As a man Jesus lived and as a martyr he died, not for individual fellows—father or mother or brethren or sisters, —but for the Type and Ideal in human nature which he perceived in his own soul and revealed in the souls of his followers. It is in this sense, I take it, that he speaks of himself as the Son of

Vicarious sacrifice

Man. At all events it is as the Son of Man, as the Pattern of ennobled Humanity, that his image is engraven in the heart of Christendom.

Imago Christi

Aye, it is in this sense that he images all that is most worthy and beautiful in human living; for men who own a true humanity live not for hand-service or lip-service to their companions, but for their ideal of what a man should be and a life should be. And that men die for such an ideal, die willingly, die by the thousand and the tens of thousand, has not the great war shown? does not history show it? They march and they battle and they accept crucifixion for the Son of Man; and this is their salvation; it is in this that they find God. Here again is a supreme human truth which is the supreme Christian truth, and which makes the life of the founder of the religion its ultimate revelation. Scripture, writes Pascal, says "that God is a hidden God, and that, since the corruption of nature, he has left men in a blindness from which they cannot issue save through Jesus Christ, without whom all communication with God is taken away: *Nemo novit Patrem, nisi Filius, et cui voluerit Filius revelare.*" And surely, there is a revelation in the hearts of all men of that Son who is their ideal of what man should and may be, and in the image of the Son a vision of the hidden God.

Pascal on the hidden God

V

From time to time in the course of the events of the life of man there come periods which mark the close of the natural chapters of human history. Usually such periods, such chapters, are

Chapters of history

better seen with their remoteness; the perspective of ages is required to bring into relief the full rounding out of historic episodes. But on occasion the chapter is closed with such finality, the changes which mark its period are so vastly volcanic, that not even to the contemporary mind is its meaning lost, and to men in their own day is brought realization of the fact that once again a mode of living, a Dispensation, has been tried out by mankind, and that once again the eternal truth of human nature has been told in its temporal parable.

Our own day

In such an hour of finality, in such a period of history, our days are cast. But yesterday, through all our cities, down all our gauded highways, we rode in fatuous pomp, confident, complacent, exalted in our own material and intellectual works; and but yesterday up from Tartarus there thrust a tongue of consuming flame, and the pride of our works became ashes, —nay, but today! for the fumes have not yet cleared, and we still grope blindly amid the burning dust of our own destruction. Four hundred years ago, in such another period as is ours, Europe passed from the Middle Ages into the Renaissance. The change began with the religious wars and the breaking down of old ecclesiastical conceptions; and it moved forward, through broken bars, to the myriad fantastic specializations of life which make up our civilization: to the new political conception of the sovereign irresponsible among sovereigns, to the new vagaries of the arts and compartmentalizings of the sciences, to the new divisions and

multiplications of our economic and social institutions and of our ideal interests,—everywhere to politics for politics' sake, art for art's sake, knowledge for the sake of knowledge, magnitude and wealth and power for the sake of magnitude and wealth and power. In the domain of religious form, during this period, the development has been parallel: the dissolution of the international church, the problem of the separation of ecclesiastical from political institutions, the multiplication of sects and of theologies, and finally the secularization of life with a sort of Sabbatical conformity as its religious lien; in short, an effort to separate out from the substance of life the religious element, and to make of it a thing apart. And as with religion, so with philosophy. We speak of an emancipation of mind, when what we mean is rather a withdrawal from life. The mission of philosophy, as wisdom of the highest things, yea, as the handmaiden of theology, has been disowned, even with the quiet Cartesian gesture of conformity, and we have passed on to quibbles about knowledge, to creeds of experience based upon the shallows of experience, to critiques that touch the pulse of no spiritual need, and to antinomies of disembodied reason which die away into the vanities of logistic. . . O René Descartes, clear-eyed and clean-souled, true in devotion to truth, wouldst thou have had courage so to disown the past hadst thou seen unto what mouthings and mummings and shadow-plays thou wert parting the way? For philosophy is become as an histrion's art, whereto

The Church

To Descartes

the curtains rise amid indifference and fall unto darkness.

I speak in no forgetfulness of the much that is subtle, that is true, that is noble in modern philosophy, and I speak in no condemnation, for it is ours to understand, not to reject history. But I speak also with a consciousness which today many a man shares with me of the pitifulness of the intellectual failure which has closed the era of the Renaissance. For the Great War, like a biting irony, has torn away the foundations of our conceits and stripped us of our sufficiencies. Under the test of a naked human passion the Renaissance philosophies have been but as thin hands and shrill voices uplifted against a wind of disaster. The realisms that knew no reality save number and power, the idealisms that glozed with soft speech our unhealed sores and deep corruptions, the foolish adorations of the natural man, the sounding cant about evolution and progress, all are become but as gibbering and grimace, meaningless. In an hour when men had their utmost need of a full intelligence, an age which had boasted itself intellectual above all ages fell hapless into the Abyss.

Irony of the Great War

With the Great War the period of the Renaissance is come and another episode of human history is turning to the past. Yet it does not pass without its lesson, its enlightenment, even though we shall be slow in reading the symbol. For it has shown us that reason alone is not sufficient for the guidance of life; it has shown us that patriotism is not enough, that the needy

Patriotism not enough

soul calls also for the solace of a last viaticum; and it has shown us once again that the road to wisdom is through suffering. It has thrown into relief also, and anew, the image of Faith. In the course of the war we have seen men capable of cruelties and wickednesses which we had dreamed to be forevermore impossible; but we have also seen them rising to nobilities of vicarious sacrifice in which we had begun to disbelieve: in its depths and in its heights human nature has opened unforeseen ranges, below reason and above reason, and we must set new measures for men. We must take into account the whole reach of human possibilities, arrogances and humilities, negations and aspirations, and we must assess against the world not alone what men have done, but what they have been baffled in attempting, finding in futile impulse and in the dim prayers of unillumined souls perhaps our securest clue to the understanding of that Cosmic Nature which has so strangely created us strangers in her midst. The pattern of bones upon a fossil slab is but the hieroglyph of the shining creature that breathed and cried in the uncounted past; the dead themselves are but the proclamation of life, whose riddle is read not in the material token or the dissolvent fact but in the very glamours of living endeavor. In the end, it is even in the magnitude of our failures that we read the magnitude of our faiths.

Men's capabilities

The dead proclaim life

Before us, through the gray of depression that is settled upon the nations, lies the road to the discovery and recovery of the meaning of history, the white light of the symbol. We have

had a new lesson, a new revelation; it is ours to resolve it, not treading again the ways of the departed, but seeking in our own fashion the light in which, despite all illusions, our life itself is an act of trust. To religion and philosophy, conjoined in their mutual quest of the highest truth, is appointed the natural guidance. In the period just past they have moved in separation, not wholly, but essentially; and neither has thereby gained in its hold upon men's minds and hearts. In the future, they must recover their community, if not of form, at least of understanding, until once more in portraying the transfigured Man they shall have searched out the Logos of the World.

A new revelation

I am reverting to Christian imagery, but how else than revert if in this alone I find the vehicle of my thought? For if the world be a symbol and its meaning such truth as I find implied in human nature and in human life, then Christianity is everlastingly true. And because the world *is* a symbol and life an expression of faith in the fact of a meaning, I find in the study of nature and of history but the one interest of the discovery of a true reading, and in the recorded history of Europe and of Christendom but the one possible reading. Whereof the token, like a stamp ineffacable, inescapable, waxes in greatness and intensity with each repetition of its eternal truth: for its form is forever the same, cast as in relief upon the chaotic gloom, a stupendous Crucifixion, haloed with supernal light as out of a cleft in the heavens, and lifted up amid the night of an outer Darkness.

Truth everlasting

It is for philosophy to point the way; it is for him who hath the eyes to see the vision.

—*Plotinus.*

To this nobler purpose the man of understanding will devote the energies of his life. . . . .

I understand; you mean that he will be a ruler in the city of which we are the founders, and which exists in idea only; for I do not believe that there is such an one anywhere on earth?

In heaven there is laid up a pattern of it, methinks, which he who desires may behold, and beholding may set his own house in order. But whether such an one exists, or ever will exist in fact is no matter; for he will live after the manner of that city, having nothing to do with any other.

—*Plato.*

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